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BAPTIST WORTHIES



By

WILLIAM LANDELS. D.D.

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BAPTIST WORTHIES:

A SERIES OF SKETCHES OF

DISTINGUISHED MEN

WHO HAVE HELD AND ADVOCATED
THE PRINCIPLES OF

The Baptist Denomination.

BY

WILLIAM LANDELS, D.D.

LONDON:
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PREFACE.

THE Baptist denomination is rich in the memory of its distinguished men. During the last three hundred years, the men who have sprung up in connection with it, or on examination have embraced its principles, would suffice to shed lustre on any body of Christians. Not only did they take rank among others who had claim to greatness, but several of them attained to decided pre-eminence in the pursuits to which they devoted their powers; and in various departments of thought and effort there have been Baptists who, although less distinguished than the greatest of their brethren, will worthily compare with the members of any other denomination.

The Author has long cherished the conviction that good service might be rendered, especially to the youthful members of our body, by laying before them, in convenient form and compass, some account of these great men's lives. A healthful stimulus might be derived from mental contact with such distinguished merit. Attachment to our denomination might be strengthened by acquaintance with an ecclesiastical ancestry of which any people might reasonably be proud. And among others our principles might be more favourably and candidly considered when they are shown to have commended themselves to men of such name and fame.

As the result of this conviction, arrangements have been made for the publication of a series of sketches of our most distinguished men. Most of the sketches have already been delivered as Lectures to Young Men's Societies in different parts of the

country. They make no pretensions to historical research, but simply deal with well-known and accepted facts, presented in such a manner as will give the reader some conception of the character of the men. They will be issued with the magazines in monthly parts, each part containing a complete sketch, and will embrace the following :—

1. ROGER WILLIAMS, the Apostle of Soul Freedom.
2. JOHN MILTON, the Poet.
3. JOHN BUNYAN, the Allegorist.
4. ANDREW FULLER, the Theologian.
5. WILLIAM CAREY, the Linguist.
6. ROBERT HALL, the Preacher.
7. JOHN FOSTER, the Essayist.
8. ADONIRAM JUDSON, the Missionary.
9. WILLIAM KNIBB, the Philanthropist.
10. Sir HENRY HAVELOCK, the Soldier.
11. Sir ROBERT LUSH, the Judge.
12. JAMES A. GARFIELD, the Statesman.

ROGER WILLIAMS,

The Apostle of Soul Freedom.

THE name of Roger Williams, too little known in the land of his adoption, is scarcely known at all in the land of his birth. There are few of our countrymen who can tell who he was; and although in America, on whose destiny he exerted a more powerful influence than almost any other of her citizens, his memory has not been suffered to sink into such absolute obscurity, it has not yet attained to that widespread and honourable notoriety usually called fame, and to which it is fairly entitled, among a people who are justly proud of their country, and who cherish the names and deeds of their heroes, until, to sire and son, and mother and daughter, they are, throughout all the homesteads of the land, as "familiar as household words."

This comparative neglect of one so worthy of honour is matter for sincere regret. The character of the man, and the services he rendered, not only to his country, but to humanity at large, render his memory too precious a legacy to be lost. Deeds like his are pregnant with bracing influence, and to make our youth familiar with them is an efficient means of promoting individual excellence and improving national life;

so that, from self-interest as well as gratitude—from the advantages we may derive from it, as well as on account of the services he has rendered—does it behove us to preserve and perpetuate his memory. There are few lives so disinterested as his, and few men were so closely identified, while they were yet unpopular and unacknowledged, with the great principles of religious liberty around which contending parties rally, while they form the springs of the mightiest movements of modern times, and mould the legislation of the foremost nations of the world.

Although the great battle in which he was one of the earliest and most distinguished champions is far from being fought out, the principle for which he contended has made great advances since his day, and the tide of victory still flows and will continue to flow in that direction. On the Continent of Europe, the great and hoary spiritual despotism which issues its decrees from the seven-hilled city has lost much of the power with which it tyrannised over the souls of men. And though the Reformation, arrested by the earthly governments on which it blindly leaned, has not fulfilled its early promise, the impulse it gave to free religious thought is working still; and though it may be manifesting itself in licentious unbelief in some directions, it is also gradually destroying all remnants of the restraint imposed on the conscience by a persecuting age. In our own country, persecution by law for any form of religious belief has become a thing of the past, and though there are disabilities to which some religionists are liable, and special favours are shown to others, even these unjust usages are now become the subjects of legislative enquiry; and with the downfall of one establishment already accomplished, we can see looming in the distance—and not far distant either—the overthrow of others, and with that the removal of the last remnant of

religious intolerance from the statute-books of the land. In the Western world, where Roger Williams fought his battle, this result has already been gained. Throughout the great Republic the principle of absolute religious freedom he advocated has been universally established, so that no man legally suffers in his person or estate, or occupies a position inferior to others, because of his conscientious religious belief. And if those of us who are the adherents of that principle, believing it to be at once in accordance with the will of Christ and conducive to national prosperity,—if those of us who, in our persons and families, are reaping its advantages, owe any debt of gratitude to the men who asserted it at first, and sacrificed all they possessed in its defence, no small portion of that debt, as the sequel will very clearly show, is due to the memory of the sorely persecuted, the patiently enduring, the faithful and heroically disinterested ROGER WILLIAMS.

Of his early years we know almost nothing. One report says he was born in 1599, another in 1606. Which is the correct date matters little for our purpose, and had we the means of doing so, we should not care to devote much time to the settlement of the question. His birthplace is in South Wales. At Conwyl Cayo, near Lampeter, in Carmarthenshire, he first saw the light. His parents appear to have been plain, substantial, well-to-do people, probably farmers, for his father is said to have lived on his ancestral estate of Maestroiddyn, in the hamlet of the same name. The character of the son, and the account he gives of his early religious impressions, would lead us to infer that they were godly people who, with some degree of skill as well as painstaking, brought up their boy "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." For after he had become an old man he writes: "From my childhood, now about threescore years, the Father of lights and mercies touched my soul with a love to Himself, to His

Only-begotten the true Lord Jesus, and to His Holy Scriptures." It is not certain, but the inference is not unnatural, that the state of mind here described was owing to parental instruction, and that, as in the case of many others, it was under his father's roof he received those impressions which proved the seeds of that moral and spiritual excellence for which he was distinguished in after years.

Although no mention is made of the schools he attended, his early mental training cannot have been neglected; for in due time he appears to have studied at one of our Universities—it does not seem quite certain which; nor is it settled whether he was supported from the resources of his parents, or by the charity of Sir Edward Coke, who is said to have been a generous patron to him at this period of his life. Having finished his preparatory studies, he was ordained a minister in the Church of England: it is not said where or by whom. He is also said to have been settled in some parish; but even that statement does not seem so well authenticated as to leave no room for doubt.

If he were settled, his incumbency could not have been of long duration. For, as early as 1631, we find him on the other side of the Atlantic, occupying the position of a minister among the early settlers, who had there sought an asylum for their persecuted worship; and very soon incurring the persecution of his brethren by his advocacy of the rights of conscience to an extent which even they were not prepared to tolerate. As it is his advocacy of this principle on which his title to fame mainly rests, it will be necessary for us to go back a little into the ecclesiastical history of the time, in order that we may see what was his precise relation to it, and how far, as compared with others, he is entitled to be called *the Apostle of religious freedom and equality*.

The Reformation in England effected a change less thorough, and had more in it of the political, and less of the religious element, than in any other country in which its principles were adopted. At its commencement it was little more than a quarrel between King and Pope; and the separation of England from Rome was more the result of Henry's lust and covetousness than of any religious principles which were at work throughout the nation.

Vain and self-confident by nature, rendered still more so by the atmosphere of flattery which surrounds the throne—flattery not less injurious to its objects than inconsistent with self-respect in their minions,—that monarch had rushed into controversy with Luther; and not only with the coarseness characteristic of the age, but with an arrogance all his own, although justified, it may be thought, by his royal rank, had endeavoured to defend the Papacy against the Reformer's assaults. The proud title of "Defender of the Faith," worn by Henry after he had thrown off his allegiance to the Papacy, and by his successors still, in disregard of the circumstances in which it was given, and the disgrace brought upon it by its first wearer, was the Papal reward for this service.

Henry, proud of his new title, did not hesitate, when occasion offered, to give it a practical interpretation very different from that which the Pontiff intended. With the infallibility common to his office, Leo X. combined a want of foresight with which, to ordinary mortals, it seems strangely at variance. Ignorant of the real character of Henry, he saw not that passions were at work in the royal breast which would soon lead to an open rupture with the Papal See; and that the dutiful son, whom he had dubbed "The Defender," would soon prove his right to the title by determining, without reference to Rome, the

faith of his subjects. The King had seen Anne Boleyn, and become enamoured of her beauty; and immediately his tender conscience was seized with sudden pangs on account of the unlawfulness of his marriage with his brother's widow. The religious soul of "The Defender" was exceedingly sensitive to the impropriety—the sin—of living in wedlock with the Queen, and demanded a dissolution of the marriage. This could only be effected by Papal decree, and when the Pope refused to comply with Henry's wish, the latter soon taught him that he had reckoned without his host. The King could not allow his conscience to be overridden, even by the highest ecclesiastical authority. His holy passion for Anne Boleyn, and his religious dislike to Katharine, were too strong to be thwarted by any Papal *non possumus*. Fortunately the state of the kingdom favoured his righteous designs. The people had grown weary of Papal exactions—did not like to see their country impoverished by the continual demands of Rome; and, though Papists in religion, most of them were still favourable to the royal supremacy. Wycliff's voice had been heard in England—Tyndal's Bible had been read—the popular faith in the hierarchy had been somewhat shaken, so that, in case of a struggle between Pope and King, the latter could reckon on their sympathy. And Henry, who was acute enough to see this, ventured to gratify his wish in relation to the Queen and Anne Boleyn, though at the expense of a rupture with his former patron.

Having thus openly defied the Pope, Henry was not long in adopting vigorous measures with the English priesthood. When the wily Cromwell suggested to him how much he might enrich himself by the seizure of Church property, and how the clergy had rendered themselves liable to such a measure, by recognizing the legatine authority of Wolsey, by the illegal exercise of which the Cardinal himself had

fallen beneath the penalties of a præmunire, he found the King a willing listener, ready to carry out his suggestions to the utmost. The possessions of the clergy were declared forfeit to the King; and they allowed to retain their place in the Church, and to enjoy such of their emoluments as he was pleased to grant, on conditions which made them virtually his abject slaves. The King was the declared "Head of the Church." In two Acts of Parliament of the time she is actually styled "The King's Church of England," and "The King's English Church." His decree was her law. Nothing could be done in her except by his authority. The power of appointing to office rested with him or his delegates. Even the permission to read the Bible, which was afterwards granted, was coupled with the prohibition to understand it otherwise than the King, through his subordinates, might decree.

Thus Henry's covetousness and ambition combined with his lust to separate England from Rome. No great principles were at issue. No Scripture doctrine destructive of Papal pretensions was taught. No assertion of the right of conscience led to the national upheaval. It was simply a quarrel between the two potentates in the first instance, and afterwards a determination of the King to humble, and aggrandise himself by humbling, the priests. And the immediate result to the Church was not any reformation in doctrine or discipline; but the despotism of a royal butcher in exchange for that of a licentious Pope.

The youthful and well-disposed Edward VI., was more pliable than his father, and, along with the Regent Somerset, more desirous of furthering the principles of the Reformation. Hence the bishops who favoured those principles had more sway in the councils of the State, and influenced more the ecclesiastical legislation of the time. That legislation was

more in favour of the reformed faith and worship, but it had no more respect to the rights of conscience than the legislation of previous years. More Protestant in form than Henry had prescribed, conformity to it was enforced with scarcely less rigour. Recusants, after being tried by ecclesiastical authorities, if found incorrigible, were handed over to be burned or beheaded by the secular power. And even such men as Latimer and Ridley, although they afterwards suffered martyrdom for their principles, were so tainted with the spirit of the times as to approve of the cruel sentence. As the despotism of the Pope had previously been exchanged for that of a self-willed, headstrong monarch, so now the latter was supplanted by that of a conclave of bishops who exercised authority in the name of a well-disposed youth. And to earnest conscientious souls who were unable to believe according to order, the yoke was not less galling because the uniformity enjoined was more in harmony with the principles of the Reformation. Popery in form had been abjured, but the Popish spirit was as rampant as ever; and the true principle of religious liberty had gained little or nothing by the change.

The accession of Mary altered the position of parties. The ecclesiastics who had been expelled from office for their adherence to Rome, had now an opportunity of applying to their opponents the persecuting measures from which they themselves had suffered. Bonner and his coadjutors under Mary, although their names are now so infamous, in consigning Cranmer and others to the stake, were but following, with additional zeal perhaps, the example which these had set them during their tenure of power. Rogers, the first martyr of Mary's reign, pleaded for the execution of Joan Boucher, and when remonstrated with on the cruelty of the procedure, said that "burning alive was no cruel death, but easy enough;"

so that when afterwards he shared her fate, he was but receiving in his own person the gentle treatment which he had recommended in the case of others. It is difficult to cherish any enthusiastic regard for martyrs of this stamp. "It required no great sagacity," says Macaulay, "to perceive the inconsistency and dishonesty of men who, dissenting from all Christendom, would suffer none to dissent from them; who demanded freedom of conscience, yet refused to grant it; who execrated persecution, yet persecuted; who urged reason against the authority of one opponent, and authority against the reason of another. Bonner acted at least in accordance with his principles. Cranmer could vindicate himself from the charge of being a heretic only by arguments which made him out to be a murderer."

There was in fact but little to choose between the two parties; nor does it say much for our impartiality that we so fiercely execrate the one, and warmly eulogise the other. The one favoured Popery more and the Reformation less, the other adopted the Reformation so far as suited its purpose. They both breathed the same intolerant spirit, and were about equally severe in their treatment of the noble souls who dared to think otherwise than the ruling powers decreed.

Nor did the much-extolled reign of Elizabeth bring any relief to tender consciences. With all her great qualities as a Queen, she inherited the haughty imperious spirit of her race, and could little brook anything like freedom of thought in her subjects. While she graciously yielded what she could no longer firmly hold, because demanded by the great body of her people, she gave no quarter to the few whose principles were at variance with those commonly held, and whose persecution excited no general remonstrance. She championed the principles of the Reformation, and thereby rendered essential service to England and the world, but she

trampled most ruthlessly on the Protestantism which dared to run in any other groove than that prescribed for it by her imperious will. Under her, as much as under Henry, to believe and worship otherwise than the Sovereign allowed was an offence punishable with death, and on more than one who dared to be thus singular was the death-penalty inflicted.

Although this state of things lasted, with some slight modification, until the Protectorate of Cromwell, it was not without protest on the part of God-fearing men, who objected to the intrusion of the State into the domain of conscience; and who, amidst the gusts of passion, the veerings of political opinion, and the relentless persecution to which they were exposed, contended for the glorious principle of religious liberty.

Even from the time of Henry VIII. downward, there were those who deprecated the interference of the magistrate in matters ecclesiastical, believing and teaching that religion was a thing of the heart—the production of the Divine Spirit alone; and that a Church was a community of persons who had been thus spiritually quickened, agreeing to obey the laws and observe the ordinances of Christ, and in which therefore the sword of the magistrate had no place whatever.

In the reign of James I. these sentiments were placed on record in a notable production, entitled "Religious Peace; A Plea for Liberty of Conscience," * and containing such noble utterances as the following:—"Seeing, then, the one true religion of the Gospel is thus gotten, and thus defended and maintained—namely, by the word preached only; let it please your Majesty and Parliament to be intreated to revoke and repeal those anti-Romish and cruel laws, that force all

* Published in 1614. Author's name, Leonard Buskin. He was a citizen of London, poor and persecuted—a Baptist.

in our land, both prince and people, to receive that religion wherein the King was born, or that which is established by the law of man." "By fire and sword to constrain princes and peoples to receive that one true religion of the Gospel, is wholly against the mind and merciful law of Christ, dangerous both to King and State, a means to decrease the kingdom of Christ, and a means to increase the kingdom of anti-Christ." "Kings and magistrates are to rule temporal affairs by the swords of their temporal kingdoms, and bishops and ministers are to rule spiritual affairs by the Word and Spirit of God—the sword of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and not to intermeddle with one another's authority, office, and function. And it is a great shame for the bishops and ministers not to be able to rule in their Church without the assistance of the King and magistrate; yea, it is a great sign they are none of Christ's bishops and ministers. If they were, they would not be afraid nor ashamed of their faith; nor yet would they persuade princes and people to persecute, and force one another to believe them; but would use only the assistance of God's Word and Spirit, and therewith suffer their faith and doctrine to be examined, proved, and disputed, both by word and writing." "IT IS NOT ONLY UNMERCIFUL, BUT UNNATURAL AND ABOMINABLE; YEA, MONSTROUS FOR ONE CHRISTIAN TO VEX AND DESTROY ANOTHER FOR DIFFERENCE AND QUESTION OF RELIGION." The year after this appeared, 1615, another pamphlet was published by a member of the Baptist Church, which came over from Holland, where it had been formed in 1609, "to seek the salvation of thousands of ignorant souls in their own nation," and brave the persecution which was then raging in England. The treatise, which is in the form of a dialogue, argues in the most forcible and intelligent manner for perfect religious freedom. And in the prefatory epistle, signed, "*By Christ's*

unworthy witnesses, His Majesty's faithful subjects; commonly (but most falsely) called ANABAPTISTS," there occurs the following passage, which will sufficiently show the purport of the book:—"We do unfeignedly acknowledge the authority of earthly magistrates, God's blessed ordinance, and that all earthly authority and command pertains unto them; let them command what they will, we must obey, either to do or suffer upon pain of God's displeasure, besides their punishment; but all men must let God alone with His right, which is to be Lord and Lawgiver to the soul, and not command obedience for God where He commandeth none. And this is only that which we dare not but maintain upon the peril of our souls, which is greater than bodily affliction."

In view of such facts and utterances as these, we cannot give Roger Williams the credit of being the first to propound the principles of religious freedom. Neither do we claim for his views the merit of originality. Scholar and reader as he was, he was doubtless acquainted with these noble testimonies. And, in any case, he must have been influenced by that spirit of freedom which, then brooding over the moral and political chaos, was, after much struggle and convulsion, to evoke from it a new order of things. His connection with the Church may have precipitated the conclusions to which he was naturally disposed. Whether he were a settled clergyman, or only in "holy orders" without place, a spirit so passionately fond of freedom as his would not be likely to brook the slavish uniformity which Archbishop Laud was so sedulously endeavouring to promote. Questions of vestments, and postures, and lights, which were all in all to that distinguished ritualist, as they are still to our ecclesiastical stage managers,—what were they to a mind that disregarded forms and enquired into the reality of things?

These questions, so infinitely small, would be dismissed with impatient disdain; and the conclusion soon formed, that a Church in which Laud was the presiding genius, and rubrics determined the eternal destiny of human souls, was no home for him. Better seek another sphere on those far-distant Western shores, whither some of his countrymen had already fled in search of an asylum for their persecuted faith, and liberty to worship God in another manner than that which the Church and the Government prescribed.

But, though his was not the honour of first propounding the principle of absolute religious freedom, he was the first to introduce it into the government of states. The settlement of Providence in Rhode Island was the cradle of this great principle. In it the experiment was first fairly tried of keeping religion entirely free from the interference of the civil power, and so well did it succeed, that in all subsequent legislation the principle was never infringed. The Rhode Island State, into which the Providence settlement grew, has never yet been disgraced by one act of religious intolerance, and its example has long since been followed by every member of that great confederacy of States, with which are now so largely identified the hopes and aspirations of humanity.

If the experiment was made at first on a small scale, as we have heard the adherents of an exclusive and persecuting system tauntingly remark—just as if questions of morality were to be determined by magnitude, and as if a man could not act a noble part except on a large stage,—it was not the fault of Roger Williams. He could but use what influence he had. He was not born on the steps of a throne, where his position enabled him to give laws to nations. He was not the statesman of a great empire, where his voice in the national councils might have pleaded for the principles which

were to mould her destiny. He was not the conqueror of a vanquished people to whom he could give laws at the point of the sword. He was but a persecuted preacher, and afterwards the leader of a handful of men who formed a community which grew into a State. And he did what he could by laying in the foundations of that State the principle which would make her a pattern to others, and is destined yet to have a place in the statute book of every free State in Christendom. And whether or not this had been the result of the experiment, no one who thinks rightly can detract from its merit because it was made on so small a scale. Be the sphere wide or narrow, the honour of the actor is the same. For "he that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." And when we think of the magnitude to which this thing of humble beginning has grown—how it predominates over one hemisphere, and influences the most enlightened legislation of the other—we see how appropriate is that question of inspiration, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" and must admire the prophetic sagacity, and large-hearted tolerance, and dauntless courage, and inflexible integrity of the man who, when it was scouted by all other rulers, could, in founding a State, take his stand on the principle which an enlightened future would recognise and applaud, as, in spite of opposition, it gradually won its way into the legislation of commonwealths the mightiest and most renowned in the history of the world. It is greatly to his honour that he could see how the value of principles is not dependent on the circumstances in which they are tried, and, in his comparatively obscure position, act his part with as much fidelity as if the senate-house of a mighty empire had been his stage, and the civilised world spectators. For it is given to but few men—only to prophetic and heroic souls—to perceive the deathless power of

a true principle, and the mighty issues which flow from insignificant beginnings.

"We stride the river daily at its spring,
Nor, in our childish thoughtlessness, foresee
What myriad vassal streams shall tribute bring,—
How like an equal it shall greet the sea.

"O small beginnings, ye are great and strong,
Based on the faithful heart and weariless brain!
Ye build the future fair, ye conquer wrong,
Ye win the crown, and wear it not in vain."

In tracing the struggles in which Williams had to engage as the champion of this great principle, we have to traverse a history which is very much at variance with existing beliefs. Nevertheless, we must ask for the reader's patience while we present, in few words, the facts of the case. Most readers are familiar with those spirit-stirring lines of Mrs. Hemans, in which she describes the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers on the shores of New England in 1620,—the bleak and inhospitable appearance of the coast on which they landed at that season of the year; the varying ages of the fugitives, among whom there were men of hoary hair, and babes at their mother's breast—the "faith's pure shrine" in quest of which they went so far, and how

"They left unstained what there they found,
Freedom to worship God;"

and most have received the impression they are so well fitted to produce. It seems a pity to interfere with it. But if we are to give honour to whom honour is due, the romance of poetry must give place to hard historical facts. The lines are not true of those to whom they were originally applied. Freedom to worship God exists there now, but it is not owing to those men. They found that freedom there for

themselves; but, as the sequel will show, they refused it to others. To our hero, and to him alone, belongs the honour of having "left unstained what there he found"—of securing to others what at much cost he had gained for himself—that spiritual freedom which is humanity's most sacred and inalienable right.

It is necessary to an understanding of what follows to have distinctly before our minds the different settlements in Massachusetts Bay, with which Williams became temporarily connected. After the founding of Plymouth by the Pilgrim Fathers, who left Holland in the *Mayflower*, the settlement at Salem was commenced by a company of emigrants from England, in 1628. Two years later, a much larger company, in which were men of higher station, greater wealth, and more liberal education than any that had preceded them, landed in the bay, and formed several other settlements, of which Boston, the future seat of government, was the most important. It was at the latter place that Mr. Williams landed in 1631, not, however, to remain there, for his views as to the functions of the civil magistrate being far in advance of those held by the settlers, and hesitating to join a congregation which, as he thought, took a too lenient view of the sins of the Church of England which had driven them from their home, and finding the settlers in Boston scarcely less determined on enforcing uniformity than Laud and his coadjutors in England, he shortly afterwards removed to Salem, where his gifts and graces led to his being invited to become assistant to the Rev. Mr. Skelton, then pastor of the Church there. There the persecuting spirit of the colonists did not suffer him to rest. On the very day on which he commenced his ministry, the colonial authorities interfered, expressing their disapprobation of the step, and in violation of the Church's right and polity, re-

quiring it to stay the proceedings. Their opposition was continued, and notwithstanding that Williams took the usual oath of allegiance, and was prepared to render obedience to the authorities in all civil matters, they so harassed him and the Church of which he was the properly chosen minister, that in the course of a few months he felt constrained to leave a sphere where he was likely to labour with great acceptance and usefulness, and had formed many endearing friendships, and take refuge in the neighbouring colony of Plymouth, where he was beyond the jurisdiction of Massachusetts Bay.

The settlers at Plymouth, having long been entirely severed from the English Church, and having enjoyed the ministrations of Robinson in Holland, were, on the whole, more liberal than the neighbouring colonists, and less likely to take offence at Williams' views as to the impropriety of holding communion with the Church of England, although differing from him as to the functions of the civil magistrate. They gave him a favourable reception. "He was freely entertained," says Governor Bradford, "according to our poor ability, and exercised his gifts among us; and, after some time, was admitted a member of the Church, and his teaching well approved, for the benefit whereof I shall bless God, and am thankful to him even for his sharpest admonitions and reproofs, so far as they agreed with truth." He exercised his ministry here for about two years, during which his first child was born to him—a daughter, whom he named after its mother. In addition to his labours among the settlers, he cultivated acquaintance with the neighbouring Indian tribes, forming friendships with them while he acquired their language, both of which proved very serviceable to him in after years. Still, Plymouth was not destined to become his home. Although his able teaching and blameless life

secured for him their affection and respect, and although the government took no action against him, some of the leading men regarded him with suspicion, because of his antecedents, and his known views as to the rights of conscience. And when, in 1633, he returned to Salem, Elder Brewster, on proposing his dismissal, persuaded the Church at Plymouth to relinquish communion with him, lest he should "run the same course of rigid separation and anabaptistry which Mr. John Smith, the se-baptist at Amsterdam, had done."

The occasion of his return to Salem was an invitation which he received from the Church there. His brief ministry had been very profitable to them, and was remembered with great pleasure. And when the failing health of Mr. Skelton rendered the appointment of a successor imperative, their thoughts naturally turned to his former assistant, whom the colonial authorities had driven away. The invitation, under the circumstances, was honourable to him and to them. And when, notwithstanding his former experiences, he complied with it, his decision was gratefully hailed by the Church. The attractiveness of his ministry may be gathered from the fact that when he returned to Salem "not a few left Plymouth to place themselves under his spiritual care."

He was not long permitted to labour there in peace. His views very soon brought him into collision with the Court and the ministers of religion. Probably he gave umbrage to the latter by questioning, along with his colleague Mr. Skelton, the expediency of a meeting which they held for the discussion of doctrinal and other subjects, lest it should ultimately interfere with the freedom and independence of the Churches. This fear may have been groundless, or it may have been justified by their tyrannical tendencies. At

the worst it was Congregationalism in excess, and it showed the jealous regard for others' rights which was characteristic of the man. Their next act would seem to show that his suspicions were not unfounded. Anything more essentially tyrannical is not found in all the annals of despotism. In Plymouth, which was not under the Massachusetts Bay jurisdiction, he had presented a treatise to the Governor and Council, questioning the right of kings to dispose of the territories of barbarous peoples without their consent. Anything more manifestly true and just one would suppose could not be. It had even been recognised in the instructions given to emigrants by the British Cabinet, and why it should have excited the ire of the Boston authorities one cannot understand. Nevertheless, although his treatise was not published—although it had never been used in their colony, but was locked up in his own desk—he was required to deliver it up to the governor, and by the advice of the ministers of religion was ordered to appear before the Court to receive censure. Williams' response was most conciliatory. He did not renounce his opinions, pleaded that the Treatise had been written only for the private satisfaction of the Governor of Plymouth, but expressed his regret if he had committed any wrong; avowed his loyalty to the King, and offered his MS. to be burned.

Into the various questions—some of which we should think scarcely grave enough for pulpit discussion—which agitated the young community, and on which Williams freely expressed his opinion, it is needless for us to enter; suffice it to say, that many of his opinions were obnoxious to the leading colonists, and that their dislike to his great principle of religious freedom, of which, as yet, they were not able to form a just conception, led them to put the worst construction on all he did and said. Nor was their displeasure

lessened, perhaps, when they saw how much he was in favour with many of the people. His blameless life and excellent ministry so commended him to the Church in Salem, that on the death of Mr. Skelton he was invited to become their sole and settled teacher. And though the Court, as formerly, remonstrated, the Church asserted her independence, and he was instituted to the Pastorate in 1634. The Court, indignant at this supposed contempt for its authority, very soon found opportunity for showing its resentment. He was summoned before them on the charge of publicly questioning the King's patent, and calling the Church of England Anti-Christian; summoned again for teaching that a magistrate ought not to administer an oath to an unregenerate person. He opposed their attempt to impose what was called the "Freeman's Oath," in which every man over sixteen years of age was virtually required to transfer his allegiance from King Charles to them. Its object was to prevent "Episcopal and malignant practices against the country." This, he held, was at variance with the Colonial Charter and the duty of British subjects; and so successfully did he maintain his ground that the Government were obliged to yield to his remonstrances. So matters went on until the decisive and final struggle separated him and them.

This arose in connection with a law which the magistrates enacted, requiring every man to attend public worship and contribute to its support. Against this, of course, Williams protested, maintaining that the jurisdiction of the civil power extended "only to the bodies and goods and outward estates of men," and had nothing to do "with conscience and religious opinions,"—that "no one should be bound to maintain a worship against his own consent." The arguments of their ablest divines, who were appointed to reason with them and confute his heresies, produced no change in his opinions;

and while the controversy was going on the magistrates found opportunity for employing arguments of another sort. The people at Salem applying for a piece of land to which they preferred a claim, the Court refused it to them, on the ground of their having shown contempt by proceeding to settle Williams as their minister in opposition to its remonstrance. The flagrant injustice of which the authorities were guilty in thus confounding things so widely different, drew forth from Williams a letter to the Churches of which the magistrates were members, requesting that the said magistrates should be admonished to desist from a course which was "a breach of the rule of justice." To this, which they deemed little better than open rebellion, the magistrates responded by depriving the Salem deputies of their seat until due explanation and apology had been given. The submission of the town and the apology of the deputies, after one of their number had been some time in prison, was the consequence of this high-handed procedure. And when Williams wrote to his Church urging them to withdraw from communion with the other churches in the colony, the members were too cowed to render him any further support in the unequal contest.

He now stands alone, with far less of earthly support than Luther at the Diet of Worms. His church, having succumbed to the persecution, has forsaken him. His own wife adds to his affliction by her entreaties and reproaches, "until," says Cotton, his great opponent, "he drew her to partake with him in the error of his ways." Although the Court which tries him is far less imposing than that before which the German Reformer stood, those who constitute his world are all opposed to him. Yet, unsupported as he is, he calmly awaits the gathering storm. His health has given way "by his excessive labours, preaching thrice a-week, by his labours

night and day in the field; and by travels night and day to go and come from the Court." But nothing can shake his stedfastness of purpose. Formerly he offered to give up his MS. to be burned, and expressed his regret if he had committed wrong. Now he has no regret to express nor apology to offer. He is the advocate of a principle which is to influence the destiny of generations yet unborn—a principle supremely valuable as it is manifestly true,—and come what may, against the world in arms, he is prepared to defend it. The ministers, consulted by the Court, have declared him worthy of banishment for teaching that "the civil magistrate might not intermeddle even to stop a Church from apostasy and heresy." In July he is summoned before the General Court, then in session at Boston, and after a lengthened consideration time is allowed to him and the Church at Salem "to consider these things till the next General Court, and then either to give satisfaction or to expect the sentence." The next session, held in October, finds him unchanged, and on November 3rd sentence of banishment is pronounced, not by a very large majority, although the ministers, all but one, approve. In six weeks the sentence is to take effect, but afterwards the time is extended so as to allow him to remain till the spring.

Meanwhile things do not go so smoothly as the magistrates could wish. Their harshness has excited the sympathy of the people. Salem especially is in a state of commotion. Williams has withdrawn from communion with the Churches, and holds meetings in his own house, which are largely attended. The orthodoxy of the colony is more than ever endangered. It is reported to the magistrates that he continues to teach as heretofore; that "taken with an appearance of his godliness," many of the people are ready to accompany him in his exile, and to found a new settle-

ment in Narragansett Bay. Dreading the consequences which may ensue from the formation of a colony holding such pestiferous principles in close proximity to their own, the magistrates, although two or three months of his time remain, resolve to ship him off perforce, in a vessel ready to start for England. He disobeys the summons addressed to him for this purpose; and when the officers are sent to carry him on board the ship, they find, on reaching his house, "that he had been gone three days before; but whither they could not learn."

We do not wish by this rehearsal of facts to indict these early settlers, but to give a proper view of the real position of our hero. His opponents, with all their severity, were high-minded, noble, conscientious men, who did their best according to the light they had. They bore valuable testimony to the supremacy of conscience, by suffering no earthly power to infringe on their own; albeit, they did not see that others who differed from them were entitled to the same freedom. This was their great mistake—a mistake which rendered them intolerant just in proportion as they were highly conscientious. They believed their doctrines and ecclesiastical polity to be in harmony with New Testament teaching. They had sacrificed much for them, hence they valued them highly: and, not knowing better, adopted stringent legal measures—the more stringent the more precious they were—to guard them against the inroads of heresy, whether from one quarter or another. The "Freeman's oath," against which Williams protested, was designed to protect them from Episcopalianism; and still severer measures were adopted to prevent the uprising of democratic tendencies, such as a law sentencing Baptists to banishment, under which a man was actually tied up and whipped for refusing to have his child sprinkled. The Quakers, who

appear to have been special objects of dread to them, fared even worse. Fines were imposed on those who introduced them into the colony, or in any way countenanced them. They themselves were to be whipped with twenty stripes, and kept to hard labour until they could be transported. On returning, they were, if men, to have an ear cut off; if women, to be severely whipped. On returning a second time, both men and women were to have their tongues bored through with a red hot iron. It shocks us to think of Christian men inflicting such cruelties on their fellow-Christians; and while we experience the horror they excite, it is well for us to remember that they are but the natural consequence of introducing the sword of the magistrate into the domain of conscience and of faith.

It was in the depth of winter when Williams left his home. Behold him then, in shattered health, a solitary homeless fugitive, exposed to all the rigours of a New England climate, tossed about in those stormy seas in an open boat, seeking a home on those bleak and inhospitable shores, drenched with rain and bitten with frost, beaten by the winds and waves, without shelter at night, often without food by day, and what he had of the coarsest kind, "not knowing what bed or bread did mean," landing occasionally to seek food and consult with the Indians as to his future place of abode, suffering all this through the persecution of those who were once his companions in tribulation. For more than three months this continued—"I was sorely tossed for one fourteen weeks." He had the testimony of a good conscience to support him; but nevertheless he felt his sufferings most keenly, as the following touching allusion shows. In controversy with Mr. Cotton, the bitterest of his persecutors, he says, "Had his soul been in my soul's

case, exposed to the miseries, poverties, necessities, wants, debts, hardships of sea and land, in a banished condition, he would, I presume, reach forth a more merciful cordial to the afflicted." Happy the man whose sufferings have wrought in him the effect which these words indicate; not souring, as it might have done, but softening and subduing his spirit, that he may feel more tenderly towards other sufferers; like the bruised flower giving forth most of its fragrance when crushed! The persecuted is more to be envied than the persecutor, when he carries with him into his exile that heart's ease which turns his sorrows to such good account. In spite of the cruelty of the human instrument we can see in his banishment the Divine hand, moulding him for his lofty mission, that he may "reach forth a more merciful cordial to the afflicted."

At the end of fourteen weeks he arrived at Sekonk, on the east side of Pawtuckets river, and, obtaining permission from his old friends, the Indians, began to build and to plant. Their hospitality was very grateful to him, as we can well imagine, and as he himself has testified in the following not very musical but expressive lines:—

> "God's providence is rich to His,—
> Let none distrustful be;
> In wilderness, in great distress,
> These ravens have fed me."

But even here he was not suffered to rest many months. The hounds of persecution still dogged his steps. After he has had the labour of preparing the soil and sowing the seed, and is anticipating the harvest which will yield the means of subsistence for him and his, before his crops are ready for reaping, he receives intimation from the Plymouth authorities that he has "fallen into the edge of their bounds, and, as they do not wish to offend their neighbours at the Bay,

they must request him to remove." Peacefully he embarks in a canoe, with five companions, who by this time have joined him, and sails down the river till they arrive at a little cove on the opposite side, where they are hailed by the Indians with the cry of "Netop"—*What cheer?* Encouraged by this friendly salutation, they land and hold parley with the Indians, but very soon re-embark, and sailing a little further down the river, finally land near to a spring of clear water—a fit emblem, as Dr. Underhill says, of the blessings which would flow to the world from the principles of religious freedom, which are now to find an asylum there.

Here they planted the town of Providence, capital of the state of Rhode Island. His influence with the Indian chiefs, Canonicus and Miántonomo, obtained for him, although not without compensation, a grant of lands and meadows which thousands and tens of thousands of money could not have bought. The manner in which these were disposed of was characteristic of the man. He had impoverished himself in procuring them, having mortgaged his house in Salem for that end. He was in the extremest poverty, so much so that he records with gratitude how Governor Winslow of Plymouth had put a piece of gold into his wife's hand. He had been forced to leave his crops unreaped, and with the winter coming on, was obliged to build a house, and had little time to make other provision for his family. Want was at his door, absolute starvation, except for such means of subsistence as he might procure by fishing, or the charity of the Indians might supply. The lands were his to dispose of as he should see meet, "as much as any man's coat upon his back." He might have sold them to settlers, and thereby not only obtained compensation for what they had cost him, but greatly enriched himself. But such was not his plan. It was not for his own aggrandisement he had

become a fugitive, but in defence of human rights; and no personal motive was allowed to influence him in the disposal of what was so unquestionably his own. Without personal consideration, he reconveyed the lands to his fellow-settlers, who, like himself, sought an asylum for their faith. "I desired," he says, "it might be for a shelter for persons distressed for conscience. I then, considering the condition of divers of my distressed countrymen, communicated my said purchase unto my loving friends" (whose names he mentions), "who then desired to take shelter here with me." When the settlers became so numerous that a civil government was required, the following is the compact by which they were bound:—"We whose names are hereunder written, being desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to submit ourselves, in active or passive obedience, to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for public good of the body in an orderly way, by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a township, and such others whom they shall admit into the same, only in civil things." And when, after they had obtained their charter, under which the general Assembly was elected to frame a code of laws, the Magna Charta of the State so framed concluded with these magnificent words, the noblest surely which ever influenced the government of nations:—"These are the laws that concern all men, and these are the penalties for the transgression thereof, which, by common consent, are ratified and established throughout the whole colony. And, otherwise than thus, what is herein forbidden, all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God. AND LET THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH WALK IN THIS COLONY WITHOUT MOLESTATION, IN THE NAME OF THEIR GOD, FOR EVER AND EVER."

nanimity, we have only to add the dark background which the conduct of the Massachusetts authorities supplies. His signal public services failed, as his private character had done, to overcome their enmity. They had public thanksgivings, honours for their General, and triumphant receptions for their soldiers; but no thanks for him who had performed, what Bancroft justly terms, "the most intrepid and most successful achievement of the whole war; an action as perilous in its execution as it was fortunate in its issue." Even the sentence of banishment, although the Government was moved on the question by Ex-Governor Winthrop, was left unrepealed. The colony he founded was excluded from all commercial intercourse with theirs. It was exposed to their vexatious and troublesome interference. It was shut out by their influence from the Confederation which was afterwards formed. And when their treatment compelled him to go to England that he might obtain a separate charter for Rhode Island, the Massachusetts people, whom in their emergency he had served in such a noble and disinterested manner, refused him permission to pass through their territories. Perhaps there never was an instance in history in which religious differences had so much effect in biassing the feelings of those who otherwise were noble-minded men.

We have nothing further of a very eventful nature to record, and may as well here draw our narrative to a close. In March, 1639, he, with a number of others, renounced infant baptism, and formed the first Baptist Church in America. In July of the same year he was, with eight others, excommunicated by the Church at Salem; and thus was "destroyed the last link which bound him to the Congregational Churches of New England, where infant baptism and persecution

abode, as in other Churches in sisterly embrace."* Some time afterwards he went further even than this, renouncing all sacraments, not because of any change of view as to the scripturalness of believers' immersion, but owing to his belief that ordinances had become invalid through the corruptions of the Church. The infant colony he continued to watch over in the most assiduous manner, caring more for its interests than for those of himself and his family. Twice over he made a voyage to England on its behalf, remaining there a considerable time on both visits, and doing all mainly at his own expense. For the first visit the colony voted in reimbursement of his outlay the inadequate sum of one hundred pounds, which, small as it was, he never received in full. The second time they tried beforehand to provide what was required for expenses, but failed, and he was obliged in consequence to sell his trading house in Narragansett, giving up, at the same time, as a matter of course, the profits of a lucrative trade. While in England he formed the acquaintance of some of her leading statesmen, such as Vane, Milton, Lawrence, Cromwell, and others; and on one of his visits published "The Bloody Torrent of Persecution," the most ambitious of his works. He was successively elected President and Assistant Governor of the colony, which, notwithstanding the hostility of Massachusetts, and the internal dissensions occasioned by the misconduct of some who sought to abuse the freedom which they did not deserve, prospered exceedingly in material things; and in spiritual answered increasingly the noble purpose of its founder, so that, thirty-five years after its formation, he could say, "Here, all over this colony, a great number of weak and distressed souls, scattered, are flying hither from Old and New England; the Most High and Only Wise hath,

*Underhill. Introduction to "Bloody Torrent of Persecution," xxvi.

in His infinite wisdom, provided this country and this corner as a shelter for the poor and persecuted, according to their several persuasions." So matters went on until his death, which took place, it is supposed, in his eighty-fourth year. Notwithstanding the rough treatment he received, and the labours in which he was incessantly engaged, time dealt kindly with him. He lived to see the principles for which he had pleaded and suffered embodied in the constitution of a prosperous State; and now, from the seat of his well-earned repose, he beholds them spreading throughout the world to an extent which even he could not have dared to anticipate.

Thankful are we to give this brief recital of facts, so worthy to be held in remembrance, especially because of our persuasion that, by bringing men in contact with so much moral worth, we are rendering them most valuable service. If, in view of such a life, there are those who can speak of him as a crotchety man, we can only say in reply, "Perhaps he was." Nay, from some points of view, and it may be from yours, we should say, "Certainly he was. He was crotchety, fanatical if you will, as all martyr spirits have been,—as every man is, who ever lives as in his great Task-master's eye. Conscience was supreme with him, and not for the sake of making himself agreeable to others would he violate its behests. He had sacrificed all for its sake, and could not afford, even as he was not inclined, to disregard it in the most trifling matters. A visionary impracticable man! says the worldling who has an eye to what will pay. But so were the goodly fellowship of the prophets; the glorious company of the apostles; the noble army of martyrs; the greatest and the best of every age and nation. But he was none of these things in the sense of being fluctuating in his opinions, or erratic in his course. Few men ever equalled him in the tenacity with which he

clung to a great principle of action, making it the basis of all his procedure, and proving his faith in it by accepting all the consequences to which it might legitimately lead. As the historian Bancroft truly says, "His wrongs had not clouded his accurate understanding; in the capacious recesses of his mind he had revolved the nature of intolerance, and he, and he alone, had arrived at the great principle which is its sole and effectual remedy. . . . In the unwavering assertion of his views he never changed his position; the sanctity of conscience was his great tenet, which, with all its consequences, he defended, as he first trod the shores of New England; and in his extreme old age it was the last pulsation of his heart." Nor did noble cause ever find a nobler advocate. While Freedom has often suffered from the character as well as the excesses of its friends, and demagogues have appealed to popular passions for the furtherance of selfish ends, Williams's disinterestedness and magnanimity were not only beyond suspicion, but above all praise. He deliberately sacrificed all he had—possessions, position, prospects—for the public good. His adversaries detested his principles, but could find no fault with his singularly upright life. Notwithstanding the fierce persecution to which he was exposed, the breath of slander never sullied the spotless purity of his name. Mistaken he may have been in some instances; but even his enemies admit that he was sincere. The soundness of his judgment might be questioned, but the purity of his motives never. He was one of the most simple-minded, true-hearted heroes ever raised up by a beneficent Providence to render service to the world. And when we consider how much the great principle, of which he was the unflinching advocate, has hushed religious animosities and advanced religious thought, by leaving men free to receive, without fear of legal molestation, whatever light heaven might vouchsafe

to them, thus furthering the great cause of truth and righteousness, we hesitate not to say that, beyond the world's warriors, or its statesmen, or its discoverers in the walks of physical science, Roger Williams is entitled to take rank among the foremost benefactors of mankind.

What encouragement there is for earnest workers in the marvellous progress of his great principle! And what triumphs its modern champions have reason to anticipate before long! With what eagerness those early colonists sought its extinction! What pains they took to smother it! How they hunted it from place to place, and trampled on it when they could, and tried to crush it out of existence! They might as well have sought, by concealing and confining the morning light, to prevent the dawning of the day. They would give it no place in their territory. Its teacher they deemed a pestilent fellow,—dangerous, as he no doubt was, in a colony where the sun of truth was not permitted to shine, except in the manner prescribed for him by Cotton and Co. They do not think it worth while to give us any accurate account of Williams's movements, not imagining that posterity would ever care to enquire after him; feeling confident that, if he can only be silenced or banished, his windmill theories will soon pass into oblivion. And, lo! the spark they are so eager to extinguish bursts into a blaze in spite of them, and flames up heaven-high; and posterity looks at their doings with interest, chiefly as they are made visible by its light; and the hero whom they could not tolerate gradually comes to be hailed as one of the greatest benefactors of the world. For his great principle shines brightly and steadily over that western hemisphere, and shoots its rays athwart the darkness that still broods over the European mind, and promises ere long to rouse the nations to a freer and nobler life. And even young and rising colonies, away in the dis-

tant parts of the earth, free from our hampering traditions, have caught its diffusive beams, and to a greater extent than we are already walking in its light. Steadily and surely it advances to the conquest of the world, and the mighty strides it has recently made seem to indicate that the triumph is near at hand. All modern legislation, yea all modern thought, tend in the direction in which Williams first led the way. Mighty changes are on the eve of transpiring. Cheering portents are abroad. We feel the precursory vibrations of that mighty but quiet revolution which is to introduce the new order of things. Prophets who have long observed the signs, to whom we cry, "Watchman, what of the night?" tell us that, though the struggle between light and darkness, between religious freedom and religious tyranny, is not yet past, the final triumph is sure and cannot be long delayed. Yonder are the pale gleams which herald the dawn. Nay, they have already blushed into the rosy streaks of morning. A little while, and our eyes shall greet the day. The fierce hag of persecution, with her withered countenance and fiery eyes, is skulking away with the fleeing shadows. The spell of superstition, which pressed like a nightmare on the hearts of men, is breaking as the strong sleepers stir themselves in their slumbers. Popery, though making frantic efforts to retain its hold upon the nations, feels them slipping the while from her nerveless grasp; snubbed in one direction, repelled in another, crippled in a third, its last stronghold in Europe gone, the days of that hoary despotism are numbered. The working of free religious thought, the desire for self-government in the Church, the awakening in her of a sense of her dignity, will lead her to free herself from the trammels of political alliances, to shake herself from the dust of degradation in which they have caused her to crawl, to loose herself from

the bands which they have laid upon her neck, and to stand forth free from their thraldom and pure from their contamination as becometh Christ's own bride. And all the customs which have been foisted into her by external authority, and for which there is no ground in New Testament teaching, will be flung into the limbo of forgotten vanities, and of gods that have been cast away. How different her aspect then from what it was when she leaned on an arm of flesh, and bartered for its help her liberties and rights! No more shall she cling to those instruments of persecution which have elicited the reproach of the ungodly. No more the thumbscrew, or the rack, or the scaffold, or the stake, or the sentence of banishment, or the prison cell. No more, where the light shines in its fulness, the favoured religionist forcibly extracting from the pockets of another the means of supporting his worship and his creed. No more the magistrate's sword enforcing that religion which claims to be enthroned in the judgments and the hearts and the consciences of men. Even religious bickerings and animosities shall largely cease when political equality has toned down arrogance, and removed the burning sense of wrong; and halcyon days of peace shall settle down on the sorely distracted lands. It is no dream. It comes. It is not far distant. Soon, soon it will be here. It requires no prophet, nor the son of a prophet, to discern its near approach.

"I feel the soul in me draw near
The mount of prophesying;
In this bleak wilderness I hear
A John the Baptist crying;
In the far east I see upleap
The streaks of first forewarning,
And they who sowed the light shall reap
The golden sheaves of morning."



JOHN MILTON,

The Poet.

THE appearance of John Milton's name in our list of Baptist Worthies will probably give rise to the old question, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" Among the readers of his poetry there are few who have any conception of the views he held on the great principles which distinguish us from other bodies of professing Christians; and not a little surprise may be felt at our placing him among those narrow sectaries whose stubborn conscientiousness is indeed acknowledged, but generally at the expense

of their mental culture, and breadth, if not loftiness, of view. Our first duty, therefore, is to mention our reasons for placing his name on our list.

Without quoting at length, we may refer the reader to his *Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, in which all doubt on the matter is removed by Milton's own words. It is not affirmed that he was ever a member of a Baptist Church. The fact of his name not appearing in any Church Roll is to us a pretty conclusive evidence that he was not. If he had been a member, his posthumous fame would have made any church careful that such a fact should not be forgotten. But not the less are we convinced that his views, legitimately carried out, would have issued in his joining such a church had there been such a church willing to receive him. His non-membership, however, is sufficiently accounted for by the fact of his theological divergence from the churches of the time. For although, on fundamental questions, his principles were, in the main, what are now termed evangelical, he was too much inclined to Arminianism for the stiff Calvinism which then prevailed. And on the relation between the Father and the Son—the first and second Persons in the Divine Trinity—indulging in speculation where all speculation is at fault, he favoured opinions that were not strictly orthodox. On these grounds, we can very well understand how, with the importance then attached to strict uniformity of creed among Church-members, he may have thought it useless to seek, or have sought in vain, admission to any existing church.

His own words, however, in the *Treatise* referred to, settle all dispute as to the principles he held. While he was at one with Baptists on the points on which they agree with other non-conforming bodies—such as the sole and sufficient authority of Scripture in all matters pertaining to

religious belief and practice; the constitution and officers of a Christian Church; its power to regulate its own affairs without the intervention of any man or body of men; its consequent independence of the civil magistrate in everything relating to its own internal management, and its duty to support its own ordinances and institutions without drawing on the funds of the State,—on the points on which we differ from other non-conforming bodies he has also spoken, with a clearness and force not easily surpassed, and thereby has placed himself unquestionably on our side.

Of Baptism he writes: "Under the Gospel, the first of the sacraments, commonly so called, is BAPTISM, WHEREIN THE BODIES OF BELIEVERS WHO ENGAGE THEMSELVES TO PURENESS OF LIFE ARE IMMERSED IN RUNNING WATER, TO SIGNIFY THEIR REGENERATION BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND THEIR UNION WITH CHRIST IN HIS DEATH, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION. With the exception of the one word "running," as denoting a quality in the water that does not appear to be required, at least by some of the immersions recorded in Scripture, these words are exactly those which represent the views now held by the Baptist denomination. And in favour of the position here taken as regards subject and mode, he argues at considerable length. This settles all question as to his being a Baptist in sentiment, and justifies us in claiming the weight of his name, great as it is, in favour of the principles and the practice by which we are distinguished from all other sections of the Church of Christ.

As Baptists, we may well be proud of having such a name identified with our principles. Grander there is none in the illustrious roll of English history. Take him all in all, morally as well as mentally, he is, perhaps, the greatest man which our country has produced. In particular directions he has had superiors, some surpassing him in one thing and

some in another; but we know of none in which are combined in such eminent degree so many of the qualities which command our admiration. There have been thinkers more profound, if not more original. Smaller men in certain matters displayed a sounder judgment; statesmen we have had of greater practical sagacity; and in pure and lofty patriotism he has equals, though perhaps no superior. Even for genius there is one who, by universal consent, is placed on a loftier pedestal. But although in these particulars he may have rivals, in the sum of those qualities which constitute an exalted manhood, he stands, to our thinking, unrivalled and alone. His intellectual powers, if they do not make him the first, at least place him in the front rank, of his countrymen. In the rich and gorgeous eloquence of his writings; in the wealth of thought which makes them brilliant as cloth of gold; in the fancy which adorns them; in the imperial imagination which embodies itself in such majestic forms; in their stately movement; in the abundance of allusion through which his sentences roll onward, not cumbering themselves, but ever, as they increase their wealth, advancing with quickened pace to their grand climax; in their sonorous organ peals, and shrill trumpet sounds, and "soft warbling symphonies," and "linked sweetness long drawn out," he is unsurpassed, if not unequalled, even as he is in the prophetic saintliness of his life. And in the combination of the two—in the grandeur of character which is the resultant of the whole, he stands out in proud preeminence as the greatest product of his country—of all Englishmen the foremost, grandest man of his own or any age.

The superiority in intellectual gifts is conceded to Shakespeare, or to the author of the works that bear his name. Milton is not much distinguished for dramatic power. Un-

like the dramatist, whose personality never appears in his creations,—who represents men and things even as he looks on them, with something of the immobility of a disinterested spectator,—and whose intellect works free from the disturbing influences of passion or emotion, or an aggrieved moral sense in a high state of excitement, Milton impresses the stamp of his individuality, in its then existing state, on all that he produces. His genius, moreover, exercises itself, although in a loftier, yet in a much narrower sphere. He does not mirror the universe like the dramatist, nor project and complete such manifold and opposite creations. He moves in a narrower groove, and hastens with greater eagerness to his goal, not disporting himself by the way with the foibles and weaknesses and vices of men, nor delineating, as if for amusement's sake, the character of wits and clowns and sots, and not presenting to us, therefore, such a many-sided view of human life. But who shall say how far this mental inferiority is the necessary accompaniment of his moral greatness? We care not to ask whether he were mentally capable of such varied dramatic representation, or whether the dramatic be the greatest intellectual faculty. We find more to command our admiration in the moral earnestness which grapples directly with existing wrongs, than in the greatest intellectual power by which they are dispassionately surveyed and delineated. If the breadth of Shakespeare's intellect excites our wonder, the loftiness of Milton's, the sustained majesty of its movements, the elevated purpose to which it is consecrated, commands our homage. It does not in our estimation detract from, but rather enhances, his greatness, that, realizing the solemnity of life and his own responsibility at a time when his country demanded his best services, he devoted his mighty intellect to more important tasks than that of furnishing employment for the

talents of actors, and pleasure for the patrons of theatrical entertainments, by the creation of mirth-provoking characters. And in estimating the merits of the two, it should not be forgotten that if Shakespeare is at home in lower regions where Milton is never found, Milton is at home in higher regions into which Shakespeare rarely ventures. If the one could paint humanity in its lower as well as in its loftier phases better than any other man, the other excels every known writer in his superhuman creations. The conception of an angel, fallen or unfallen, is, to our thinking, a not inferior work, and does not betoken a less powerful imagination, than the conception of a fool, or a jester, or a stable-boy. That Milton did not attempt the latter is morally much to his honour. It is a mark of greatness, not of littleness, that he was too earnest in feeling, too lofty in purpose, had a moral nature too sensitive and too highly pitched to be content with painting the world as it was,—smiling at its follies, not altogether ignoring, yet not severely censuring, its vices, nor greatly pitying its woes, taking its good and evil very much as they came; but felt that his great business was to make it better, or, failing that, to sacrifice everything in the attempt. While Shakespeare mingled with it and reflected its passions, Milton more nobly moved above it, and, both by his writings and his life, summoned it to the pursuit of higher things. Hence the conclusion to which we come in our estimate of the two is, that while Shakespeare may have been the greater genius, Milton was unquestionably the grander man.

Although Milton was situated very differently from Shakespeare in his early life, there was not much in his surroundings fitted to develop his poetic gifts. Born on the 9th December, 1608, in the heart of the city of London,

at the Spread Eagle, Broad Street, where his father carried on the business of scrivener, brought up in the same neighbourhood, his boyish days having been passed in Aldersgate Street, he could not find much in the neighbourhood of his home very congenial to a young man endowed with poetic genius. How far his first tutor, a Scotchman of the name of Thomas Young, of whom he afterwards spoke with great respect, discerned and stimulated him to the exercise of his peculiar gifts—how far the books with which he soon became familiar compensated for his unfavourable surroundings—how far he is an illustration of the irrepressibleness of genius, we are unable to say. We only know that at a very early age he gave promise of his future greatness. He is said to have written poetry at the age of ten, and when he was fifteen composed that beautiful version of the hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm which is now so great a favourite in Christian congregations.

He left school in London, and commenced his University course at Christ College, Cambridge, when he was fifteen or sixteen years of age. The accounts of his position there are somewhat conflicting, owing probably to the different statements relating to different periods. It seems evident that he was rusticated for a time; but for what reason does not appear, possibly because his great soul would not fit into the moulds prescribed for it. It is further evident that for a time he was not on good terms with some of his fellow-students. He acknowledges as much in one of his college exercises, but attributes it in part to the fact that he had followed "different studies, or different methods in the same studies;" he admits, however, that he *may* have "spoken in a manner a little too bitter, and mixed with too much vinegar." He was called "The Lady" of his college, "in consequence, it is supposed by some, of his being so

eminently handsome and beautiful." Such a flattering interpretation of the nickname does not seem to have occurred to Milton, for in one passage in his writings he thus resents its use: "Is it because I never was able to quaff huge tankards lustily, or because my hands never grew hard by holding the plough, or because I never, like a seven years' herdsman, laid myself down and snored at midday; in fine, perchance, because I never proved my manhood in the same way as these debauched blackguards? See how absurdly and unreflectingly they have upbraided me with that which I, on the best of grounds, will turn to my glory."

Whatever may have been his position in the College at one time, it is certain that, before he left, both friend and foe bore testimony to his eminent qualities. According to Philips, because of his extraordinary wit and reading, he was "loved and admired by the whole University, particularly by the fellows and most ingenuous persons of his house." According to Anthony Wood, his political opponent, "he performed the collegiate and academical exercises to the admiration of all, and was esteemed a sober and virtuous person, yet not to be ignorant of his own parts." This same witness says, "His deportment was affable—his gait erect and manly, bespeaking courage and undauntedness." Though of lady-like beauty, there seems to have been nothing effeminate in his habits; for he was a good swordsman, with quick eye, and "accounted an excellent master of his weapon." Nor did these athletic exercises interfere with his finer tastes. With a naturally fine ear, a "delicately sweet and harmonious" voice, he was not only enthusiastically fond of music, but skilled in its practice. And if all be true that is said of his blue eyes, and fair complexion, and light-brown hair, parted down the middle and hanging in rich and luxuriant clusters on his shoulders,

and of his youthful and compact, though not very bulky physical frame, we can see the truth and appropriateness of Aubrey's testimony, that "this harmonical and ingenuous soul dwelt in a beautiful and well-proportioned body."

Although, from a letter of his, written towards the close of his college life, it appears that a friend remonstrated with him, chiding him for being somewhat aimless in his studies, and urging him to decide on his future course without delay, it is evident from the testimonies already quoted that his time was well spent. He must have been diligent in application, as well as singularly gifted, to become possessed at such an early age of his manifold accomplishments. "He was intimately acquainted with the older English literature. In theological lore he was a master. He was familiar with all the languages which were considered learned or polite—Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, and French. In Latin his skill was such as to place him in the first rank of writers and critics. A great classical scholar has pronounced that he was the first Englishman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verses with classical elegance."

While thus proficient in his studies, his muse was not idle. He managed to find leisure for the composition of some of his earlier poems. Many of his Latin elegies were produced when he was eighteen. His sonnet on Shakespeare, and that on reaching the age of twenty-one, were both composed during his college course; and his magnificent Ode on the Morning of our Lord's Nativity was composed when he was only twenty. It seems wonderful that a poem so sublime in conception and perfect in execution should be the production of so young a man. Its rhythm is exquisitely melodious, reminding one of his own descriptions —"linked sweetness long drawn out;" "a seven-fold chorus

of hallelujahs and harping symphonies." The following lines seem almost worthy of the music they describe :—

"When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook ;
Divinely warbled voice
Answering the stringèd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took :
The air, such pleasures loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

"At last, surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shame-faced night arrayed :
The helmèd cherubim,
And sworded seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
Harping in loud and solemn quire
With unexpressive notes to Heaven's new-born Heir.

"Such music, as ('tis said)
Before was never made
But when of old the sons of morning sung ;
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung,
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the welt'ring waves their oozy channels keep.

"Ring out, ye crystal spheres—
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so ;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time ;
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow,
And with your nine-fold harmony,
Make up full concert to th' angelic symphony."

The aimlessness of which his friend complained was

occasioned by a change of views as to his future course. He went to Cambridge with the intention of entering the Church, but soon became convinced that the Anglican Establishment, as she existed then, afforded no home to a spirit free and soaring like his. She was then high and dry—high enough to suit the tastes of the most ardent ritualists—so high as to be almost putrid and offensive in the nostrils of all good men; popish in everything but the name; for while she abjured the Pope of Rome, she divided the papal power between the king and his bishops, making the king the supreme, and the ecclesiastics the subordinate, pontiffs; and so, instead of a single, saddling herself with a mongrel and manifold despotism. Archbishop Laud was in his glory as posture-master-general and director of ecclesiastical millinery, not yet cautioned by the uncere-monious flight of Jenny Geddes' stool. He was teaching the English people the proper use of ecclesiastical rags and tallow, enforcing by his "devotional drill exercise" uni-formity in gestures and genuflexions, backing up his lessons by royal authority; and congenially splitting the noses, branding the cheeks, and cropping the ears, of those who were not docile enough to learn, or pliant enough to obey. What was Milton to do there? Amidst those skeletons of forms long since dead, and those musty rags, the cast-off clothing of centuries gone by, his free soul could not breathe. Milton and Laud could not move in the same sphere without coming into hostile collision, any more than truth can be lovingly associated with falsehood, or light and darkness harmonize, or life have affinity with death. Milton was intuitively conscious of this. And when, in the eloquent words of his biographer, "he but moves to the church door—glances from that station into the interior as far as he can—sees through the glass the back of a little man, gesticulating

at an open window," he "does not like the look of him or his occupation, and so turns sadly but decidedly away."

His biographer speculates as to what the results might have been had Milton entered the church. "Had that pure and courageous youth, who, two hundred and thirty years ago, stood dubious by the threshold, but crossed the dark marble line, and advanced into the sacred vestibule and to the aisles beyond, what might the result not have been? Milton as an ecclesiastic would have been Milton still; such an archbishop, mitred or unmitred, as England never had. The tread of such a foot across the sacred floor, what it might have trampled into extinction! The magnanimity of such a soul, breathed into the counsels of the Church through that approaching revolution, when Church as well as State was to be riven asunder for repair, how it might have affected those counsels, while yet the future model was in doubt, and only the site and the material solicited the architect! But it was not to be."

Certainly not. Milton would not enter any Church where abuses were so rank, and reform so impossible. His convictions were diametrically opposed to the ritualism then rampant. He considered "robes and surplices an insult to the Gospel, as if, like the first transgressors, she needed that clothing to cover her nakedness—casting an ignominy on the perfection of Christ by seeking to adorn it with that which was the poor remedy of our shame;" whereas, in the Church, robes and vestments were an essential part of the service, and childish rites and ceremonies were exalted into things of vital importance. Milton believed that, under Christ, the people were the sovereign power in the Church; whereas, in the Anglican Establishment, the people were powerless, and bishops and other dignitaries were made not by their appointment, but by the choice of a king who had

usurped Christ's place, and by the fiat of his ministers. Milton believed that an establishment was opposed to the genius of Christianity, and that the endowment of the Church by Constantine was the great cause of her corruption, leading her clergy to "gape after possessions," and "tend lands and livings," and "cower over their gold," and "prostitute every endowment of grace, and every holy thing, to sale;" and in the Church of England as she then existed he found the facts which justified his belief. And it was not likely that he, the high-souled magnanimous man, whose conscience was his king, would come down from his lofty spiritual elevation for the sake of the emoluments and the dignities of a system in which the most incompetent and worthless men were often raised to highest place, and the exercise of patronage had brought about a state of things like that which Job's messengers saw in the field when "the oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them."

Had Milton been born and brought up in some connections, it might have cost him something to sever them. But having been born free, a man of his stamp was not likely to entangle himself in such a yoke of bondage. The sham may intrude itself among the realities; but the reality will not deliberately unite itself to the sham. The eagle may by some accident be hatched in the owl's nest, and reared among the owlets. But he will not, after he has enjoyed the sweets of freedom, and knows his own fleetness of wing and power of vision, choose to make his home there. The cobwebbed roof, or the crack in the ivy-covered wall, has no charms for him who, in his callow or new-fledged youth, breathed the keen air, and enjoyed the wide prospect of his mountain eyrie. That bird, leaving the cloud-girt cliff, and sailing serenely through the azure depths with wing almost motionless and with all the ease of conscious strength—now wheeling

round the mountain's lofty summit, now piercing the dark cloud, and, heedless of the pelting hail and flashing fire and pealing thunder, passing through to bask in the sunshine beyond, now poising himself like a speck on the blue vault, now swooping down like a thunderbolt on his prey, now arresting himself in mid-heaven, and again soaring upward to gaze on the sun's unclouded glory, revelling in the circumambient air as if his very existence were a luxury, and his every movement a thrill of pleasure,—that noble bird is not likely to make his home in the owlets' nest, and fraternize with its inmates, because carrion may be picked up close by, and rats and mice are plentiful. He will sooner use his strength of wing, though it bear him over desert wastes, than snugly perch on their humble roost. He will sooner gaze on the sun until blinded with its radiance, than sit with his eyes closed by day, and only fly abroad on nocturnal excursions. He will sooner breast the storm, though its fury should shatter him, or its keen bolt lay him lifeless on the fallow, than gather his feathers about him, and comfortably doze in some dusty hiding-place. Milton was to the Church what the eagle is to the owl—the bird that gazes with unblenched eye on the noon-day sun to the bird that loves the twilight. To join her would have been an outrage on the noblest instincts of his nature. "The Church to whose service I was destined by the intentions of my parents, and in mine own resolutions, till coming to maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the Church, that he who would take orders must subscribe himself slave, and take an oath withal, which unless he took it with a conscience that would retch, he must either straight perjure or split his faith: I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing."

After finishing his University course in 1632, he spent six years of his life at Horton, in Buckinghamshire, where his father had gone to reside. Here he enlivened his leisure by the continued pursuit of his favourite studies, and the composition of some of his poetical works—*L'Allegro; Il Penseroso; Arcades; Comus;* and various sonnets. These poems, containing indications of the powers which afterwards found their highest expression in *Paradise Lost*, show how sensitive he was to the quiet influence of the surrounding scenery, of which he gives some exquisite descriptions; and are full of beautiful imagery, the product of an imagination as chaste as fertile, and betokening a purity and serenity of mind undisturbed as yet by the passionate controversies of later years. *Comus*, in particular, is a most charming poem, well described in one of its own couplets—

> "A perpetual feast of nectar sweets,
> Where no crude surfeit reigns."

It is like the music it describes in sounds which are an echo to the sense—

> "At last a soft and solemn breathing sound
> Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
> And stole upon the air.
>
> I was all ear,
> And took in strains that might create a soul,
> Under the ribs of death."

In 1638, Milton set out on a tour through France and Italy; and by the most learned and able men in both countries he appears to have been received with the greatest enthusiasm. In Italy especially, the universities vied with each other in doing honour to the illustrious Englishman. By scholars and noblemen praise was awarded to him, "which the Italian," he says, "is not apt to bestow on men of this side the Alps." He was compared to the greatest

writers of antiquity, and pronounced the superior of Homer and Virgil. Verses were written in his honour, splendid ovations were paid to him, and his journey to many of the principal cities was made to resemble a triumphal procession.

Such praise, from such competent judges, though it must have been intensely gratifying, does not appear to have awakened in him any feeling of vanity, but it strengthened his own internal prompting to give exercise to the faculty divine with which he was so largely gifted. Judging from some of his later writings, in which he gives explanation of the course he pursued, he had at this time the very highest conception of the poet's functions. His mind, "in the spacious circuits of her musing," proposed to herself objects "of highest hope and hardest attempting." He contemplated some such work as was suggested to him by the "Apocalypse of St. John," which he calls "the majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies." "Poetic abilities," he says, "are the inspired gift of God, rarely bestowed, yet to some in every nation, and are of power, beside the office of a pulpit, to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility; to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune; to celebrate, in glorious and lofty hymns, the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what He works, and what He suffers to be wrought with high Providence in His Church; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly, through faith, against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship; lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave—whatsoever hath passion or admiration in

all the changes of that which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtleties or refluxes of man's thoughts from within—all these things, with a solid and treatable smoothness, to paint out and describe; teaching over the whole book of sanctity and virtue, through all the instances of example, with such delight to those especially of soft and delicious temper, who will not so much as look upon Truth herself, unless they see her elegantly dressed—that, whereas the paths of honesty and good life now appear rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they will then appear to all men both easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed."

With this view of the poet's gifts and functions, he had an equally exalted conception of what ought to be the poet's life, "that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men, or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praiseworthy." Yet with all this, he, with a noble ambition which was justified both by his mental and moral qualities, hoped to realize his lofty ideal; and saw himself "a poet soaring in the high reason of his fancies, with his garland and singing robes about him." He pledged himself to "some work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine—like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amorist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite; nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her syren daughters; but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out His seraphim, with the hallowed fire of His altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases; to which must be added, industrious and select reading—steady

observation—insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs—till which, in some measure, be compassed, at my own peril and cost, I refuse not to sustain this expectation, from as many as are not loth to hazard so muchc redulity upon the best pledges that I can give them."

While cherishing these lofty ambitions, and gratified by the praises to which we have just referred, he felt himself suddenly called to less genial and sterner, but more urgent, if not more useful, work. The agitations were commencing in Church and State which ultimately sent Charles to the scaffold and placed Cromwell virtually if not nominally on the throne. Tidings of what was taking place reached him in the midst of his triumphal tour, and, gratifying as were the receptions he met with, and genial as was the society into which he was introduced, and exhilarating to the soul as was the high converse with some of the foremost spirits of the age, in which he was privileged to take such honourable part, that tour was abruptly terminated at what he conceived to be the call of duty. Without reluctance, though not without a sense of the sacrifice he was making, he turned his back on Italy, tore himself away from associations and attentions so gratifying to his aspiring nature, and was content to forego for years the lofty works he had planned for himself in the regions of poetry, in order that he might take part in the great struggle for freedom for which England was now girding herself. "For I thought it base," he says, "to be travelling for my amusement abroad, when my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home.

It is impossible for any one without his gifts and tastes to estimate fully the sacrifice which this decision cost him. Among those who were opposed to him he found none with whom we could deem it an honour to enter into controversy,—among those who were on his side, but few

genial associates. To "club quotations with men whose learning and belief lay in marginal stuffings,"—who thought their day's work done when they took off "their pack-saddles" and "laid down their horseloads of citations and fathers at your door, with a rhapsody of who and who were bishops here and there," was not very pleasant work; nor could he deem it "an honour to deal against such adversaries." But still more trying to him was his want of sympathy with many of the characteristics of his friends He was too profoundly devout to sympathise with the small party of learned and sceptical men who espoused the popular cause; too scholarly and refined in taste—had too much admiration for the beautiful in form and harmonious in sound, to regard with approval the uncouth manners and rugged speech of many of the Puritans. His chivalrous delicacy would have made him feel more at home among the better portion of the cavaliers who fought the battles of the King. His admiration of ecclesiastical architecture, his musical tastes and accomplishments, would have been more gratified by adherence to a Church which indulged in a more sensuous display than accorded with Puritanic simplicity. There he would have better opportunity of indulging the feelings to which he has given expression in *Il Penseroso*—

> "But let my due feet never fail
> To walk the studious cloister's pale,
> And love the high embowèd roof,
> With antic pillars' massy proof,
> And storied windows richly dight,
> Casting a dim religious light.
> There let the pealing organ blow,
> To the full-voicèd quire below,
> In service high, and anthems clear,
> As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
> Dissolve me into ecstasies,
> And bring all heaven before mine eyes."

Milton, however, was not the man either to espouse or abandon a cause on account of the qualities of its friends. He understood too well, and had too much respect for, the law of duty to sacrifice his principles to his tastes. These things might lead him with a "small willingness to interrupt the pursuit" of his lofty hopes, "and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thought, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes;" but they could not for a moment hinder his decision. The work might be little to his taste, but since the cause commanded the approval of his judgment, such service as he was able to render could not be withheld. "Were it the meanest underservice," he says, "if God, by his secretary Conscience, enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back." Thus animated, he threw himself into the struggle for liberty with such earnestness of spirit, and brought to its service such a wealth of talent, as must have helped very much to determine the issue of the contest. He did not fight, but, what was better, he expounded the great principles which lay at the foundation of, and gave direction to, the movement,—stirred the pulses of its friends as by a succession of trumpet peals, and nerved them for those deeds of daring by which they gained their victory.

Johnson sneers at Milton because, while he was rendering this service to his country, he supported himself by teaching pupils. With a blindness which, but for his known prejudices, would be unaccountable in a man of letters, the great lexicographer seems to think that Milton's sword would have helped the cause he espoused more than did his pen, and in a lumbering and spiteful sentence says:—"Let not our veneration for Milton forbid us to look with some degree of merriment on great promises and small performance; on the man who hastens home because his

countrymen are contending for their liberty, and when he reaches the scene of performance, vapours away his patriotism in a private boarding-house." One is sorry for that sneer, not on Milton's, but on Johnson's account. It indicates a degree of blindness, or something worse, which is truly lamentable in so able a man. What could be more to Milton's honour than that one so highly gifted, breathing such lofty aspirations, which already he had proved himself capable of realising, should, for the furtherance of a great object, stoop to the humble, and, as it must have proved to him, irksome drudgery of a schoolmaster! It is difficult to conceive of any better illustration of the morally sublime. To us, Cromwell charging at the head of his Ironsides, breaking the proud ranks of England's chivalry, scattering them as with whirlwind force, much as he commands our admiration, is not so grand a spectacle as that of the gloriously-gifted Milton, patiently instructing his pupils that he may earn his daily bread, while in his leisure he devotes his splendid talents to the welfare of his country and his kind. Nor can we doubt, notwithstanding Johnson's depreciatory estimate, that the services he rendered to the cause of freedom were second only to those of the great Protector himself. Indeed, it may be questioned if in their far-reaching results they were not superior even to his. At all events, this much is certain—that the writings of the schoolmaster did something to render possible the victories of the warrior and the rule of the statesman; and that in our day Milton's principles more than Cromwell's acts are a help to the cause of human progress, and a bulwark of the people's rights.

In a succession of treatises, of which, for their grandeur of conception, their enunciation of great principles, their lofty moral tone, and their earnest religious feeling, no contro-

versy ever elicited the like, he for years advocated the cause of true human freedom against all its assailants. He pleaded for the completion of the Reformation, whose progress had been arrested in England by her temporizing state-church policy. He contended against the prelatical assumptions of the bishops as both unscriptural and injurious, and in favour of the freedom and equality of Christians as members of Christ's church. He advocated New Testament simplicity of worship as opposed to the ritualistic tendencies of the age, which he deemed an injury and an insult to the gospel of Christ. He pleaded for education as the condition and guardian of freedom, and as qualifying the people for the exercise of their rights, and the discharge of their duties, as citizens and as men. He defended the right of unlicensed printing, as opposed to the bigoted intolerance of the Presbyterians, who, having gained their ends, wished to stereotype after their own mould the religious life of England. He argued for freedom of thought and the right of private judgment, and deprecated slavish submission to any human authority. He assailed the Divine right of kings, who derived, he maintained, their authority from the people, to whom, in return, they were responsible for its use. He defended his countrymen against the charges of those who condemned the execution of Charles. But at the same time he warned them that their freedom depended on their mastery of themselves, and that their worst thraldom would be found in the gratification of their own lusts—that "to be free is the same thing as to be pious, to be wise, to be temperate and just, to be frugal and abstinent, and lastly to be magnanimous and brave; so to be the opposite of these is the same as to be a slave"; and it usually happens by the appointment, and as it were retributive justice of the Deity, that that people which cannot govern themselves and moderate their

passions, but crouch under the slavery of their lusts, should be delivered up to the sway of those whom they abhor, and made to submit to an involuntary servitude. You therefore," he continues, "who wish to remain free, must either instantly be wise, or as soon as possible cease to be fools; if you think slavery to be an intolerable evil, learn obedience to reason, and the government of yourself; and finally bid adieu to your dissensions, your jealousies, your superstitions, and your lusts. Unless you will spare no pains to effect this, you must be judged unfit, both by God and mankind, to be entrusted with the possession of liberty and the administration of the government."

To these great works he brought a wealth of learning and talent, a power of conception and expression, a breadth of thought and a clearness of vision, and a thoroughness of principle, not often equalled. The principles of religious liberty have never been more clearly expounded or more forcibly maintained. He was far in advance of the best men of his time, even as he is still in advance of many of the reformers of our own. Others helped him to get rid of existing abuses; but, as Macaulay says, "The glory of the battle for the species of human freedom which is the most valuable, and was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against the ship-money and the Star Chamber. But there were few indeed who discovered the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as

well as from that of Charles. His attacks were in general directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply-seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded, the servile worship of men, and the irrational dread of innovation.

"That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear, when the outworks had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapours, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal or dreaded as paradoxical. When others feared the results of unfettered thought, he saw in it the germ of England's greatness." With a foresight which seems almost prophetic, he says—"Methinks I see a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly

radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a whole year of sects and schisms." Again he says: "Surrounded by congregated multitudes, I now imagine that from the columns of Hercules to the Indian Ocean I behold the nations of the earth recovering that liberty they so long had lost; and that the people of this island are transporting to other countries a plant of more beneficial qualities, and more noble growth, than that which Triptolemus is reported to have carried from region to region; that they are disseminating the blessings of civilization and freedom among cities, kingdoms, and nations. Britain, which was formerly styled the hotbed of tyranny, will hereafter deserve to be celebrated, for endless ages, as a soil most genial to the growth of liberty. During the mighty struggle, no anarchy, no licentiousness was seen; no illusions of glory, no extravagant emulation of the ancients inflamed them with a thirst for ideal liberty; but the rectitude of their lives, and the sobriety of their habits, taught them the only true and safe road to real liberty; and they took up arms only to defend the sanctity of the laws and the rights of conscience. That liberty for which they fought is not Cæsar's; it is a blessing we have received from God Himself; it is what we are born to;—to lay this down at Cæsar's feet, which we derive not from him, which we are not beholden to him for, were an unworthy action, and a degrading of our very nature. If one should consider attentively the countenance of a man, and inquire after whose image so noble a creature were framed, would not anyone that heard him presently make answer—That he was made after the image of God Himself? Being, therefore, peculiarly God's own, and, therefore, things that are to be

given to Him, we are entirely free by nature, and cannot, without the greatest sacrilege imaginable, be reduced into a condition of slavery to any man."

Shortly after the execution of Charles, Milton was appointed Latin secretary to the government, at a salary of £288 a year, which was afterwards reduced by one-half. During the time he held this office, a number of his prose works were written, among others the *Eikonoklastes*, and *First* and *Second Defence of the People of England.* The preparation of the latter cost him the total loss of sight. Already his eyes had suffered through his literary labours: the sight of one eye was gone, that of the other impaired. His physicians warned him that if he proceeded with his task total blindness would ensue. But such was his sense of duty that "their premonitions," he tells us, "caused no hesitation, and inspired no dismay. . . . My resolution was unshaken, though the alternative was the loss of my sight, or the desertion of my duty. . . . I considered that many had purchased a less good by a greater evil, the meed of glory by the loss of life. . . . I resolved, therefore, to make the short interval of sight that remained to me as beneficial as possible to the public interest."

Every one must feel that a blindness so incurred was more honourable to Milton than the highest earthly distinction; and will wonder at the barbarity which could reproach him with his affliction, and speak of it as a Divine judgment. How he carries our sympathy with him in his noble reply to such calumniators!

"I wish I could refute what this barbarous opponent has said of my blindness, but I cannot do it; and I must submit to the affliction. It is not so wretched to be blind as it is not to be capable of enduring blindness. . . . Let, then, the

calumniators of the Divine goodness cease to revile, or to make me the object of their superstitious imaginations. Let them consider that my situation, such as it is, is neither an object of my shame nor my regret, that my resolutions are too firm to be shaken, that I am not depressed by any sense of the Divine displeasure; that, on the other hand, in the most momentous periods, I have had full experience of the Divine favour and protection; and that, in the solace and the strength which have been infused into me from above, I have been enabled to do the will of God, that I may oftener think on what He has bestowed, than on what He has withheld; that, in short, I am unwilling to exchange my consciousness of rectitude with that of any other person; and that I feel the recollection a treasured store of tranquillity and delight. But, if the choice were necessary, I would, Sir, prefer my blindness to yours; yours is a cloud spread over the mind, which darkens both the light of reason and of conscience;—mine keeps from my view only the coloured surfaces, while it leaves me to contemplate the beauty and stability of virtue and of truth.

"Let me, then, be the most feeble creature alive, as long as that feebleness serves to invigorate the energies of my rational and immortal spirit; as long as in that obscurity in which I am enveloped the light of the Divine presence more clearly shines; then, in the proportion as I am weak, I shall be invincibly strong, and in proportion as I am blind, I shall more clearly see. Oh that I may thus be perfected by feebleness, and irradiated by obscurity!"

He felt the privation keenly. How could he fail, with his keen appreciation of the beautiful—his delight in the glories of creation—his fondness for books? He felt it, and hence that sad line in Samson Agonistes,

"Oh, dark, dark, dark amid the blaze of noon!"

Hence, too, his address to the light, in *Paradise Lost* :—

"Thee I revisit oft,
And feel thy sovereign vital lamp ; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn.
So quick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. * * * *
* * * * * Thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of eve or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine.
But cloud, instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off ; and, for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works to me expung'd and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out."

These are sad enough; but mark the prayer which follows :—

"So much the rather, thou, Celestial Light,
Shine inward ; and the mind, through all her powers,
Illumine. There plant eyes ; all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight."

The same sense of loss, but also the same noble resignation, appear in his two exquisite sonnets on this subject :—

"When I consider how my life is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,—
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
I fondly ask : but patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need

Either man's works or his own gifts: who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best; His state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait."

The blindness was not fruitless which resulted in the production of such noble lines. Not inferior in sentiment even to these is his sonnet addressed to his friend Cyriac Skinner:—

"Cyriac, this three years' day, these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of life, their seeing have forgot;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence—my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side,
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask,
Content, though blind, had I no better guide."

His blindness was followed in 1652 by the death of his first wife, whose desertion of him for a time led to the preparation of his *Treatise on Divorce*. This marriage was not a happy one. He made the mistake, in the first instance, of allowing himself to be fascinated by a pretty countenance, when he ought to have looked for more valuable qualities; and then found that, instead of having in his wife a true helpmeet, he had only a cold and comely piece of clay. With tastes that differed widely from his, with no capability of appreciating his mental and moral qualities, it is not surprising that she found his home dull, and that, having gone

on a visit to her parents, who were now strongly opposed to Milton in politics, she—with their advice, no doubt—refused to return. If the treatise which was published under these circumstances requires apology, it should be remembered that his letters requesting her return received no reply—that a messenger sent with the same object was contemptuously dismissed, and that nothing of matrimony remained to him but the chain. It should be remembered, also, that on being brought to his house, when the successes of the Parliamentary party changed her father's feelings, and led him to think their reunion desirable, Milton forgot his grievances and magnanimously received her; and not only so, but when their fortunes were low, opened his door to her father and his family.

The death of his wife left him in his blindness with the sole charge of three infant daughters, and, unhappy as he had been in his first union, it is not to be wondered at that to find a mother for them, as well as a wife for himself, he again, four years after her death, took upon him the bonds of matrimony. This time he was more happy in his choice. The lady was in every way suited to him, and his tender attachment for her is well expressed in the beautiful sonnet in which he embalmed her memory. But unhappily she also died in child-bearing, about a year after their marriage.

In this desolate and forlorn condition new troubles awaited him. Although the principles he disseminated could not die, but are bearing fruit to-day in this and other lands, the death of Cromwell in 1658 was the knell of the Commonwealth, to the establishment of which he had devoted his life. He lived to see the Restoration, which he dreaded, and had done his utmost to avert, with all the evils which followed in its train. He saw England, for which he had done so much, brought down from the zenith of her glory to the nadir of her dis-

grace. He was deprived of his office and income as Latin secretary. His books in every town in the kingdom were burned by the common hangman. His life was in jeopardy, and it is indeed wonderful that it should have been preserved, until the passing of the *Act of Oblivion* placed him out of danger, and left him free to prosecute that great work which he had never lost sight of from the beginning of his literary career, and with which his name is now most intimately and immortally associated.

Neither his circumstances nor his condition would now seem very favourable for such an achievement. He had arrived at an age when the poetic fervour of youth is on the wane. Blindness not only rendered him dependent on others for his reading and writing, but shut him out from many of the inspiring influences of nature and the genial countenances of friends. He was poor in his estate, and afflicted in his person. The cause of the Commonwealth, for which he had sacrificed everything, seemed utterly ruined. Those with whom he had been associated in the struggle were gone: some were in the grave, some in exile, some in prison. The breath of slander assailed him. He had "fallen on evil days and evil tongues." From some cause or other, probably the necessity of earning a livelihood, he was pressed with literary work, and performed tasks which were truly Herculean. He prepared a Latin grammar and a Latin dictionary; a History of Russia; a treatise on logic, and another on Christian doctrine; the two poems which followed his *Magnum Opus*, together with his last treatise on *True Religion, Heresy, Schism, and Toleration*, and one or two smaller pamphlets. All these were crowded into the last fifteen years of his life. And yet in the circumstances, and amid these multitudinous labours, he was capable of the loftiest and most sustained poetic effort ever put forth by human mind. Above all

depressing influences his genius soared to the fearfully adventurous flights, and produced the marvellously magnificent creations of the *Paradise Lost*.

Whatever differences of opinion there may be as to the relative greatness of the man, there is none as to the pre-eminent greatness of the poem. Not only is it the greatest in the English language, but according to all but universal consent its equal does not exist. No one having anything like his poetic gifts ever ventured on such a bold attempt. It is truly

> "An adventurous song,
> That with no middle flight intends to soar
> Above the Aonian Mount, while it pursues
> Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

The opening invocation is a key to the devout spirit of the book :—

> "And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
> Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
> Assist me, for Thou knowest. . . .
> What is in me dark
> Illumine; what is low raise and support,
> That to this height of this great argument
> I may assert Eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to men."

We cannot enter into any criticism of a work of such transcendent merit. Did our limits admit of it, we should not the less feel ourselves incompetent for the task. Nor need we attempt any summary of its contents. Every reader is familiar enough with it to know how it describes the Almighty's dealings with the first transgressors, His mingled anger and pity towards the victims of their wiles; how it takes us up to the plains of heaven, which have become the scenes of angelic warfare, and down into the yet untrodden depths of hell; how he describes the military

array of angels fallen and unfallen; the fearful shocks of the hostile meeting of hell and heaven; the overthrow of the rebellious host, and their headlong descent into the nethermost abyss; the uprising, at the fiend's bidding, in the regions of the damned, of that wonderful palace of Pandemonium; the conclave of rebels in council there;—how we hear their discourse, and are impressed with their fallen greatness; for, fiends as they are, they are angels, and their leader nothing less than an Archangel in ruins; how he makes them utter marvellous speech, and endows them with idiosyncrasies which make us feel that though all of them are fiends, no two of them are alike; how he shows us the earth in its pristine beauty, when the garden was the home of the innocent and happy pair; and the earth as blighted by sin, over which, cowering with guilt and shame, the unhappy fugitives wander; how he even records dialects that are held in the courts of heaven; and how, though there is grotesqueness and incongruity in some of his representations, he never falls much short of the grandeur of his theme, save when he essays that to which the loftiest genius is incompetent—a representation of the feelings and acts of the Infinite One. Few ordinary readers, it is believed, have read the book from beginning to end. It is sometimes prosy: it is frequently obscure. Yet its influence may be inferred from the fact that its vivid creations have become part of our current thought, and popular conceptions of the devil, and of the fall of man, are drawn as much from its pages as from the statements of the Word of God.

It is objected to it that the devil is his hero, and that, notwithstanding his wrongdoing, that personage is regarded with feelings which bear too close a resemblance to those of pity and admiration—pity for his fate, admiration for his powers. In this perhaps it is not Milton, but his critics that

are at fault. Evil, certainly, should be abhorred, not admired; yet the evildoer is to be pitied as well as condemned. Admiration for the faculties with which he was originally endowed, sorrowful regret mingling with indignation at their being so sadly misused, abhorrence for his wrongdoing, and pity for his misery, are the feelings with which it behoves us to look on a fallen Archangel. And it should be noticed that in this book Satan's lingering grandeur is seen just after his fall, before his pristine glory is quite obliterated. As he advances in wickedness he appears quite a different being. When squatted at the ear of Eve, the "Son of the Morning" has changed into a mean and contemptible thing, vile as the reptile whose form he assumes. Thus does the poet show—and it seems strange that so many of his critics as well as cursory readers should have overlooked the fact—the downward tendencies and the debasing influence of sin.

These closing years, during which this and the other books we have mentioned were given to the world, when blindness and misfortune had overtaken him, though in some respects the saddest, are in others the grandest in Milton's life. His fidelity to the principles of which in prosperity he had been the eloquent advocate; the calmness with which under his misfortunes he pursued the even tenor of his way; the patience with which he bore his privations and sufferings; his unwavering faith and soaring devotion; the lofty ambitions, the noble conscientiousness, by which he was still inspired,—these invest him with a moral grandeur unsurpassed even by the all but unrivalled splendour of his intellectual powers. The blind old man walks in the light of God's countenance. The baffled statesman and the impoverished author hath his inheritance and reward on

high. Though deserted by his friends, he is not God-forsaken. Celestial visitants find their way to that humble lodging in Bunhill Fields. "Celestial light shines inward, and the mind through all her powers irradiates." Thus sustained, poor as he is, integrity is dearer to him than wealth. His third wife, whom he married in 1664, would have him accept the Latin secretaryship offered to him by Charles; his reply was, "You, like other women, wish to ride in your carriage; my wish is to live and die an honest man." So he remained poor, toiling in obscurity, the greatest man in England or the world, while the minions of Charles were revelling in luxury and licentiousness. His remuneration for *Paradise Lost* was five pounds for each edition of thirteen hundred, two payments of which he lived to receive; and his wife afterwards disposed of her interest in it for eight. Poor he remained, yet making many rich; bequeathing to an ungrateful country, which had ill-requited his splendid services, a legacy richer than the dower of kings—"the most precious life-blood of his master-spirit embalmed and treasured up in order to a life beyond life." It matters little now. Time is short and eternity is long. Since he sank into the grave in 1674, when death was welcome to him as sleep to a wearied child, and his spirit soared into those regions where his imagination had previously often winged its adventurous flight, he has had time to forget, and been amply recompensed for, the poverty and hardships of his life. More glorious visions even than he ever imagined have burst on his astonished sight. And amid the "seven-fold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies" which swell through the courts above, his voice utters its harmonious numbers, and celebrates in more "glorious and lofty strains the throne and equipage of God's Almightiness." He is ranked among the hierarchies of

heaven, the first-born sons of God. He takes part in the lofty converse in which they extol God's marvellous deeds, the while they

> "Assert eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to men,"

his musical ear is charmed with the sounds which issue from the ranks of the shining ones:—

> Divinely warbled voice,
> Answering the stringèd noise
> Of helmed cherubim,
> And sworded seraphim,
> Harping in loud and solemn quire."

Yea, all creation is to him vocal with her Maker's praise. He hears the sounds he once invoked in language scarcely less musical:—

> "Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
> Once bless our human ears,
> If ye have power to touch our senses so;
> And let your silver chime
> Move in melodious time;
> And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow;
> And with your nine-fold harmony,
> Make up full concert to the angelic symphony."

He hears it all now. That is his reward, And as we think of him treading the plains of light in such illustrious companionship, with such exalted occupation, surrounded with such glorious scenes, entertained with those celestial harmonies, beholding with eyes no longer veiled the beatific vision, who can imagine that there now lingers in his breast the slightest feeling of regret that far back in the ages he spent a few years in poverty and obscurity, because, in fidelity to the cause of God and humanity, he chose to "live and die an honest man"?



JOHN BUNYAN,

The Allegorist.

THAT John Milton held Baptist principles we have established by a reference to his writings. That John Bunyan both held the doctrine, and observed the practice, of believers' immersion, there is happily no one to dispute. As Baptists, we may well feel proud of a spiritual ancestry which contains the names of men to whose pre-eminent greatness even those who had little sympathy with their religious views have borne ungrudging testimony. "Although there were many able men," says Macaulay, "during the latter half of

the seventeenth century, there were only two minds which possessed the imaginative faculty in a very eminent degree. One of these minds produced the *Paradise Lost*, the other the *Pilgrim's Progress.*"

The mere mention of these facts is a sufficient answer to those who imagine that intense religious conviction and fervent piety have a tendency to restrain intellectual effort, and to dwarf intellectual stature. In their case, at least, the effect was just the reverse. The most cursory reader of their works must perceive that their religious belief was the source of their inspiration, and that to the fact of their having chosen sacred themes, and drawn largely on the teaching and phraseology of the inspired volume, they owe in great measure their lofty place in the literature of our country.

Although there are those with whom the term Baptist is synonymous with narrowness, and coarseness, and vulgarity, and although even among those holding Baptist sentiments there are some who on that account repudiate the name, the fact of two such men holding them is enough to show that there is nothing either lowering or narrowing in our principles; and if Baptists were among the Puritans, who, as critics admit, "acted poetry," the books we have named furnish incontestable proof that Baptists could write poetry as well.

Milton was twenty years Bunyan's senior—the one was born in 1608, the other in 1628. Milton had by this time taken a lofty position as a poet, although still pursuing his college course; and his sublime "Ode on the Nativity of Christ" was published in that year. The circumstances of the two men presented a striking contrast. The one, having received the best training the University could supply, had the further opportunity of improving his mind by leisure and continental travel. The other spent his youth in an obscure

English village, receiving only the most meagre education, exposed to the degrading influences which were only too common in such localities, and growing up almost as exempt from all salutary and restraining discipline as an unbroken colt. And it is a striking illustration of how genius rises superior to circumstances, that his name should before his death become as widely known as that of his compeer; while their subsequent similarity of views shows how, in spite of their being placed in the most diverse conditions, the truth commends itself to the greatest and noblest minds.

The village of Elstow, in which Bunyan was born, and where he spent the greater part of his early life, is situated in a tract of country as flat almost as any that England contains. Without anything to distinguish it from ordinary English villages, it is not the kind of place on which one would fix as a scene in which genius should be either born or nursed. Cut off from the social and literary advantages which are common to larger centres of population, it has nothing in its natural situation to compensate for this drawback. And if Bunyan was little indebted to schools for his mental training, one cannot imagine him to have profited much by his local surroundings. Near his home, indeed, he might have found the type of the green and flower-bespread meadows which he so beautifully describes in his "Pilgrim," where "the birds in the spring-time sing all day long in a curious melodious note;" where "our Lord formerly had His country house, and loved to walk the meadows, for He found the air was pleasant;" where "labouring men have good estates." But while meadows abounded, he would have to look far, one would think, before he could find anything to suggest to him his Delectable Mountains, with their prospect of the distant city, and their precipices, over which foolish travellers are dashed in pieces, the only

thing within reach being the chalky and gently undulating English Downs. Those, however, we presume, must have formed the basis of his creation, some chalk quarry suggesting the precipice, and the clear buoyant air of the loftier ranges, where shepherds may be seen tending their flocks, both the epithet Delectable and the hill named Clear. For it is the attribute of genius not alone to describe accurately, but to idealise and glorify whatsoever it sees.

If his local surroundings were not very conducive to his mental development, his condition in life was still less so. Whether he was of gipsy descent or not, as has been both alleged and questioned, it is certain that his parents belonged to the very lowest ranks of life. He neither conceals nor is ashamed of its meanness; but, like all true men, frankly acknowledges his humble origin, and finds ground for thankfulness in what may be justly considered the unfavourable conditions in which he enters the world. "For my descent then, it was, as is well known by many, of a low and inconsiderable generation; my father's house being of that rank which is meanest and most despised of all the families in the land. Wherefore I have not here, as others, to boast of noble blood, or of a high-born state according to the flesh; though, all things considered, I magnify the Heavenly Majesty for that by this door He brought me into this world to partake of the grace and life that are in Christ by the gospel."

The thankfulness which he here expresses, though it may seem unaccountable to some, will not be misunderstood by those who reflect on the supreme importance which Bunyan attached to spiritual things, and the frequency with which high birth and worldly fulness have proved a hindrance to the reception of Divine grace. At the time he wrote he could not fail to see, in the character of those who occupied

the high places of the land, enough to make him feel thankful that his position had not exposed him to the temptations to worldliness and licentiousness which in their case had operated so fatally. With the dissolute court of Charles II., and the laxity of morals which its influence had diffused throughout the higher circles of society before him, every godly man must have felt it an advantage to be as far removed as possible from that source of moral contamination. As his lowly condition neither dwarfed his manhood, nor hindered the useful exercise of the gifts with which he was so richly endowed, there need have been no affectation in the gratitude expressed by a man of his stamp that he was preserved from the riches which have often, and especially in his time, rendered man's entrance into heaven as difficult as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. Beyond almost any other man alive, he was able to dispense with ancestral dignities. That he was Bunyan, a man on whom God had so evidently set His stamp, was honour enough, without his being able to plead that his father, or his grandmother, or some more remote ancestor, had been able to achieve some worldly success, which was supposed to render his children illustrious.

It has been questioned whether the wickedness with which he charges himself during his early years was not more imaginary than real,—whether, being of a very impressible temperament, he did not, when under the influence of religious conviction, indulge in self-condemnation rather more severely than accorded with the facts. We can make all allowance both for his temperament and his conviction, knowing how much they will influence a man's estimate of himself. But his words are too explicit to be explained away or very much modified by considerations of this nature. When he tells us that "from a child he had but few equals,

especially considering his years, which were tender, being few, both for swearing, lying, and blaspheming the name of God," we must admit that he presents a very remarkable spectacle of youthful depravity, not much mitigated by "the fearful dreams which did scare and affright him," and "apprehensions of wicked spirits," who still, as he then thought, sought to drag him away with them, "nor by the thoughts of the day of judgment," and "the fearful torments of hell-fire," with which he was troubled day and night.

Before he reached the repose of faith, Bunyan passed out of a state of violent conviction into one of carnal security, which was much more to be dreaded. When under the influence of his still unenlightened religious instincts, he gave up swearing and other sins without undergoing any change of heart; he became so satisfied with himself that there was great danger of his undergoing the fate of his own "Ignorance," or "Presumption," or of those who followed the fallacious counsels of "Mr. Legality." Because he took delight in reading some portions of Scripture, especially the historical parts thereof,—for as for Paul's epistles, "and scriptures of that nature," he says, "I could not away with them, being as yet but ignorant, either of the corruptions of my nature, or of the want and worth of Jesus Christ to save me,"—and because he "fell to some outward reformation both in his words and life, and did set the commandments before him for his way to heaven, which commandments he also did strive to keep, and, as he thought, did keep them pretty well sometimes," his self-complacency was such that it seemed to render him almost proof against any Divine appeal. In his own estimation he had few superiors; "for then I thought I pleased God as well as any man in England." The talk of his neighbours strengthened his own delusive estimate of himself. "Thus I continued

about a year, all which time our neighbours did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such a great and famous alteration in my life and manners; and, indeed, so it was, though yet I knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope; and, truly, as I have well seen since, had I then died, my state had been most fearful. * * * They began to praise, to commend, and to speak well of me, both to my face and behind my back. Now I was, as they said, become godly; now I was become a right honest man. But, oh! when I understood that these were their words and opinions of me, it pleased me mightily well. For though, as yet, I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly. I was proud of my godliness, and, indeed, I did all I did either to be seen of or to be well spoken of by man. And thus I continued for about a twelvemonth or more."

A religious condition is here described which will unquestionably compare well with that of multitudes who now pass for Christians. And yet it is a condition into which no genuine religious feeling enters; nor does Bunyan underestimate its dangers when he says, "Truly, as I have well seen since, had I then died, my state had been most fearful." There are more ruined, perhaps, by self-righteousness than by open sin; and in any case it is far more formidable than sin in the barrier which it presents to the reception of Christ. Bunyan, throughout the whole of his profligate course, was never in such a hopeless condition as now that he was so outwardly respectable, so much an object of admiration to his neighbours and of complacency to himself, while yet a stranger to Divine grace. And it is to us as to him a mark of the good providence of God that he was so placed as to overhear in the town of Bedford the conversation of a few Christian women, whose experience embraced matters so

strange to him—so high above his reach—that their mention of them roused him from his dream of security, and awakened the inquiry which issued, after many struggles and temptations, in his saving conversion to God, and in the enjoyment of that peace which passeth all understanding.

Long before Bunyan arrived at this stage of his experience, a careful observer may note in him some of the qualities which appeared prominently in his after life, and were by God's Spirit sanctified and usefully employed in the work which he was destined to perform for the Church and the world. As a lad, and even as a boy, one cannot help being struck with the vividness of his impressions, and the strength of his feelings. His was an intensely earnest nature. Its convictions were deep and powerful; and its emotions bore him along in whatsoever direction they tended, almost without regulation or restraint. The fearful dreams he mentions, which "did scare and affright" him, he had when he was but a child of "nine or ten years old." It was at the same age that "in the midst of his many sports and childish vanities, amidst his vain companions, he was often much cast down and afflicted in his mind." His natural earnestness and his powerful imagination gave a depth and strength to his religious impressions such as few experience. Thoughts that arise in his mind, according as they are good or bad, are voices either from heaven or from hell. Influences which move him are no mere abstractions, but, to his thinking, proceed either from God or the devil. The invisible takes form with him, and the vague and shadowy is clear and well defined. In the midst of a game of cat "a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?' At this I was put to an exceeding maze; wherefore, leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven, and it

was as if I had, with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if He did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for these and other my ungodly practices." When he is in distress, the words, "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled," and "yet there is room," break in upon his mind, and he concludes that the Lord Jesus in speaking them did think of him, knowing that the time would come when he should fear that there was no place left for him in His bosom. At another time, when he was in similar distress, and ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was, as if there had rushed in at the window, the noise of wind upon him, but very pleasant, and as if he heard a voice speaking, "Didst ever refuse to be justified by the love of Christ?" This made a strange seizure upon his spirit; it brought light with it, and commanded a silence in his heart of all those tumultuous thoughts that before did use, like matchless hell-hounds, to roar and bellow, and make a hideous noise within him. Sometimes his joy from such voices is as ecstatic as his sorrow has been overwhelming. "Yea, I was now so taken with the love and the mercy of God, that I remember I could not tell how to contain till I got home; and thought I would have spoken of His love and of His mercy to me, even to the very crows that sat on the ploughed field before me, had they been capable to have understood me."

Such impressions as these—and there are many such in his "Grace Abounding"—indicate qualities of mind as well as a spiritual discipline which appear prominently in his future works. A man of such powerful imagination and deep feeling was required to write such books especially as his "Pilgrim's Progress" and his "Holy War;" for only the man who can vividly picture and intensely realise is

capable of setting forth in living embodiment the principles and the movements of the spiritual life. And if we cannot, with Dr. Cheever, see in this young man the future author of the "Pilgrim's Progress," as an experienced and observant eye can see in the rough block of marble the finished production of the artist, we can at least see that such marble is required from which to make the statue, and that only by a man who possessed Bunyan's natural characteristics, and underwent his spiritual training and development, could the "Pilgrim's Progress" have been produced.

Feelings so powerful as his could not long remain unexpressed: and accordingly, while he was yet greatly exercised in mind about his eternal welfare, he began, with the encouragement of the church of which he was a member, publicly to address others. His addresses, in the first instance, were confined to the meetings of the church; but as the members "did solemnly protest, as in the sight of the great God, that they were both affected and comforted, and gave thanks to the Father of mercies for the grace bestowed on him," he was soon led, at their suggestion, to attempt more public services. This he did with great timidity at first, but as he gathered courage his preaching was found so acceptable and useful, that after a time, "being still desired by the church, he was, after solemn prayer to the Lord, with fasting, more particularly called forth, and appointed to a more ordinary and public preaching of the word, not only to and amongst them that believed, but also to offer the gospel to those who had not received the faith thereof."

No one who forms a correct estimate of preaching will doubt the efficiency, albeit he may admit the informality, of Bunyan's training for that work. Although he had no academic advantages, he had that discipline of the heart which the Divine Spirit alone can impart—that experimental

acquaintance with Divine things—that spiritual insight into the meaning of God's Word, which we must deem a far more important qualification than the knowledge imparted in our schools of learning to the ministers of Christ. And in the act of giving utterance to his thoughts, the practice which he had in addressing the church first of all, and afterwards the smaller companies gathered together by the church members who went into the country to preach the gospel, would prove as much conducive to efficiency as any training which colleges supply. Accordingly, Bunyan very soon became one of the most powerful preachers of his time. Of his early preaching, when he went out into the villages around Bedford, his pastor, "holy Mr. Gifford," as Bunyan calls him, speaks in the most eulogistic terms; and though the accounts we have of his preaching after he was released from prison are but meagre, they are sufficient to show that though there were giants in the pulpit in those days, such as Baxter, Owen, Howe, Jeremy Taylor, South, and others, he took rank with the very foremost of them, and, though his auditory was of a lower class than some of them addressed, was the most popular and effective of them all. Before his release from prison, the Baptist Church in Bedford showed its appreciation of his gifts and graces by electing him its pastor, and his labours in the surrounding district were so abundant and acceptable that he was designated Bishop of Bedford. On his occasional visits to London, crowds, more than the places of worship could contain, flocked to hear him, at an hour when ordinary preachers could not draw together a handful. "If," says an eye-witness, "there were but one day's notice given, there would be more people come together to hear him preach than the meeting-house could hold. I have been to hear him preach to about twelve hundred at a morning lecture, by seven o'clock on a working

day, in the dark winter time." When John Owen was tauntingly asked how a man so learned as he could go to hear that tinker prate, he replied, with admirable candour, that he would gladly give all his learning for the sake of being able to preach like that tinker. And he was right. "Lebanon of British theology," as he has been called by one; "second only to Augustine and Calvin," as we have heard another pronounce him; his theological and expository works praised, and justly praised, in all the churches—though, it must be confessed, much more praised than read—he might well have exchanged his sound judgment and great erudition for the tinker's vivid pictures and words of fire. Even Owen must give place to Bunyan in the services which he rendered to the church of Christ.

Bunyan's power as a preacher is traceable to several causes. Among others, the vivid and powerful imagination which made him the distinguished allegorist would bear no unimportant place. For he who is to address acceptably and usefully large audiences must have the power both to picture and to move. Not less important, perhaps, was the fact that it was eminently scriptural in its character. His figures and phraseology were largely drawn from the sacred volume, and always bore traces of its influence; and the great cardinal doctrines of the Gospel comprised the staple of its teaching. When to these qualities was added his own experimental acquaintance with the truths which he preached, we have said enough to account for his great success. His own testimony is, "Still I preached what I saw and felt. Now, therefore, I did much labour to hold forth Jesus Christ in all His offices, relations, and benefits unto the world; and did strive also to discover, to condemn, and remove those false supports and props on which the world doth lean, and by them fall and perish." As he attained to

a more advanced Christian experience, he proclaimed to his hearers the higher truths of religion; sometimes, as he tells us, with such power and heavenly evidence upon his own soul, that he could not be content with saying he believed and was sure, but was *more than sure* that the things he asserted were true. Preaching thus, with the "accent of conviction," and the warmth of experience, it was not possible that a man so gifted could fail to preach powerfully. An essential and most important element in successful preaching is that the preacher should be able to say with sincerity, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

His early preaching was the cause of his imprisonment. On the warrant of a Justice he was apprehended at a meeting at Samsell, in Bedfordshire; and, as he would not promise to give up preaching, nor suffer his friends to enter into any engagement to that effect, he was thrown into prison to await his trial, which took place seven weeks afterwards. His indictment set forth—

"That John Bunyan, of the town of Bedford, labourer, being a person of such and such conditions, he hath, since such a time, devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear Divine service, and is a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the king," etc.

On this indictment, though no witnesses were examined, he was found guilty. Justice Keelin, in what seems to us a savage tone most unbecoming in a Judge passing sentence, said:—"Hear your judgment. You must be had back to prison, and there lie for three months following. And at

three months' end, if you do not submit to go to church to hear Divine service, and leave your preaching, you must be banished the realm; or be found to come over again without special license from the king, you must stretch by the neck for it, I tell you plainly. Jailer, take him away."

Bunyan's reply was worthy of his Christian character, as the Judge's manner was unworthy of his exalted office. All that he had to say in answer to such brutal browbeating was, "If I was out of prison to-day, I would preach the gospel again to-morrow, by the help of God." It was evident that such a man was not to be coerced, either by frowns or threats. They had him away to prison, of which he had already tasted the sweets. *Home to prison*, he calls it! But not all the horrors of prison, not the pain of separation from his wife and four children, could move his dauntless soul. How much he felt this, and especially the thought of their being left without their natural protector, his own words will best show. "The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place as the pulling the flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of these mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was likewise to meet with; *especially my poor blind child*, who lay nearer my heart than all I had beside. Oh! the thoughts of the hardships I thought my blind one might undergo would break my heart to pieces. Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee! But yet recalling myself, thought I, I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. Oh, I saw in this condition I was as a man who is pulling down his

house upon the head of his wife and children; yet, thought I, I must do it—I must do it."

And so he did, committing his child as well as himself to God, and felt that God's peace was with him. "Verily, as I was going forth the doors I had much ado to forbear saying to them that I carried the peace of God along with me; and blessed be the Lord, I went away to prison with God's comfort in my poor soul."

His case seems to have given some trouble to the Justices. He was had up before them repeatedly, and always remanded. They were either unwilling or afraid to carry out Justice Keelin's threat of banishment. And as their prisoner would not promise to change his course, they kept him where he was. His friends entreated for him. His wife, who was a kindred spirit with himself, came to London with a petition for his release, and had it presented to the House of Lords. Although "a delicate young woman, of retiring habits," she appeared before the Judges and pleaded his cause "in language worthy of the most talented counsel." But all their efforts were in vain. The one condition on which his release could be granted was a condition with which the prisoner would not comply. He would not conform to ceremonies of which he did not approve. He would not utter or assent to words which he did not believe. He would not by his presence even appear to countenance the usurpations of men, who presumed to exercise the prerogative of Christ. He would not allow man to come between him and his Maker. He would not have any mortal prescribe to him the manner in which God should be worshipped. He would not be silenced in matters pertaining to religion by any earthly authority. He would not barter his spirit's freedom for any worldly advantage. In a word, he would not forego his allegiance to Christ, be the consequences what they might.

"Will your husband leave preaching?" said Judge Twisdon to his wife; "if he will do so, then send for him." "My lord," she replied, "he dares not leave preaching, so long as he can speak." "My principles," says Bunyan, on another occasion, "are such as lead me to a denial to communicate in the things of the kingdom of Christ with ungodly and openly profane: neither can I, in only the superstitious inventions of this world, consent that my soul should be governed in any of my approaches to God, BECAUSE COMMANDED TO THE CONTRARY, AND COMMENDED FOR SO REFUSING. Wherefore, excepting this one thing, for which I ought not to be rebuked, I shall, I trust, in despite of slander and falsehood, discover myself at all times a peaceable and obedient subject. But if nothing will do, unless I make my conscience a continual butchery and slaughter shop, *unless, putting out mine own eyes, I commit me to the blind to lead me* (as, I doubt, is desired by some), I have determined, the Almighty God being my help and shield, yet to suffer, if frail life might continue so long, even until the moss shall grow on mine eyebrows, rather than violate my faith and principles."

He lay in prison for more than twelve years. Twelve years! How easy to write the words! How difficult to grasp all that they mean! Twelve years! The fifth part of his life at the season when life was in its prime; when his appreciation of nature was keenest; when free exercise would have proved the greatest luxury to a stalwart frame like his; when he would have entered with the greatest zest into home enjoyments; when his physical system was full of bounding life, and capable of acting with the greatest vigour,—the fifth part of his life within the walls of a dungeon,—the little cell which he aptly calls his den! What a testimony to the heroic endurance of the man! What a

testimony to his country's disgrace! It is sad to think that England, with her Christian constitution, as they call it—her established Church, the bulwark of the true faith—had no better treatment than this for one of her noblest sons, whose worth, blinded as she was by flunkeyisms and debaucheries in high places, she was unable to recognize!

To Bunyan it mattered little what they did. Happier far was he in prison than the parson in his living, or the bishop in his palace, or the king on his throne. Yea, it may be questioned if in all England there was a man so happy or so much to be envied as that prisoner on Bedford Bridge. The "God's peace," "God's comfort," of which he speaks as dwelling in his "poor soul," is not dependent on place or circumstances—cannot be disturbed by the treatment of others. He who hath it can defy the persecutor's rage. To him,—

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage.

"For though men keep my outward man
Within their locks and bars,
Yet by the faith of Christ I can
Mount higher than the stars."

These were no meaningless sounds to him—no poetical expression of the feelings which he supposed *might* be experienced—no rhapsodical or exaggerated description of what he actually felt. Poetry apart, he elsewhere tells us of the glorious visions with which he was favoured there. "O the Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels, and God the Judge of all; Jesus the Mediator, and the spirits of just men made perfect! I have seen here what I never can express. I have felt

the truth of that Scripture, 'Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'" Most of the day was spent in "tagging laces," with his blind girl by his side—an employment which he learned in prison, that thereby he might help to support his family. But when evening came, and the child was dismissed to her home with a parting benediction, his soul, free to soar where it listed, saw those glorious visions, and indulged in those pious meditations, which are embodied in his immortal work. He had but to close his eyes, and he was no more the prisoner, but the pilgrim whose progress he so graphically describes. Bedford Gaol fades away, and his unfettered soul stands on some mount of vision where, from its commencement to its close, the course of his Pilgrim lies open to his view. There he sees the City of Destruction, and remembers how he left it with the burden on his back—the Slough of Despond, and the overhanging hill near the house of Mr. Legality, with its deep rifts and flashing fires. He recalls his entrance at the Wicket-gate—his visit to the Interpreter's house—his rapture when, standing at the foot of the Cross and gazing on the Crucified, his burden fell from his shoulders and he was free. Again he is entertained at the Palace Beautiful, finds there refreshment and repose, and at break of day wakes up singing in the chamber whose name is Peace. Or he wanders among the Delectable Mountains with the shepherds for his companions; and from the hill Clear, looking through the glass of faith, discerns in the distance the pearly gates, and golden turrets, and jasper walls, that surround the City of the Blest. Or he dwells in the land of Beulah, where, not in imagination only, but in reality, his soul summers even now, ripening for the heaven which is so near that already he inhales its

fragrance, and walks in its light, and holds converse with its shining ones—where the sun shineth night and day, and the birds sing continually, and the flowers are ever fresh and fair, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. Or, the river crossed, he climbs the hill which leads up to the gate of the City, or rather glides upward; for the shining ones have clasped his hands, and the burden of mortality left in the river no more clogs the movements of the ascending soul. The gates open at his approach—the trumpets sound in honour of his coming. The bells of the city "ring again for joy." "Angels meet him with harp and crown, and give him the harp to praise withal, and the crown in token of honour." And the hosts of the glorified, standing around, welcome him with acclamations to their exalted fellowship, saying, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

All these things are real to him—more real than the prison walls that surround him, or his prison garb or prison fare. *These* are but the illusions which shall vanish. *Those* the realities which shall endure. And being so vividly presented to his mind, he is constrained to imprint them on his page. Rousing himself from his reverie, but with beaming eye and radiant countenance, for "he writes as if joy did make him write," he flings from his graphic and fluent pen those vivid brilliant pictures, over which, after his persecutors have perished and his prison walls have crumbled into dust, and the painful circumstances of his earthly life have receded into the dim and distant past, in many lands and throughout all generations, in the closet and the chamber, in the solitary hut and crowded city, young and old, rich and poor, learned and illiterate, shall bend with ever-fresh delight.

The man who in his prison is favoured with such visions

is well able to bear his imprisonment. His enemies, it is obvious, will gain little by depriving him of his freedom. They are more likely, as the issue proves, to aid than to hinder the diffusion of his principles; for though they may silence the living voice, they cannot hinder those wonderful creations which, committed to writing and issued from the press, will travel into distant lands, and through successive generations reach the ear of millions by whom his voice could not have been heard. Fools that his persecutors were! Had they only known it, there was a power working in the man with which they could not cope—futile all their efforts to quench the fire that lighted his heroic soul. The Divine afflatus which has seized him obeys no tyrant's beck. His breathing thoughts and burning words must take wing. If they slay him, they do but prove that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. If they imprison him, they do but give concentration to the pent-up fire, that it may soon burst forth in intense flames, and run to and fro to set the world in a blaze.

There is no more striking illustration of how persecution outwits itself, and frustrates its purpose, than the history of Bunyan supplies. How clearly this is seen in the fact that in his prison studies he formed the conception and found leisure there for the composition of his "Pilgrim's Progress," the most wonderful book, perhaps, all things considered, which the English language contains. By it the persecuted tinker, as regards the numbers he addresses, has become of all uninspired men the greatest teacher in the world. He speaks to men of every age and class, and in almost every land. By the results it has produced, as seen in the light of eternity, it invests him with an honour to which few can lay claim. The splendour that beats on the loftiest throne

pales its lustre before the glory which irradiates that prison cell. The student at his desk, the artist at his easel or his block, the astronomer on his watch-tower, the engineer in his mastery over material things, the warrior in the flush of victory, the statesman in the seat of power, whatever success may have attended them, may well envy that poor prisoner his usefulness and his fame. For of all the great works done then or since, their greatness estimated by their beneficial influence, the greatest, we hesitate not to say, when we think of its wide-spread influence and undying spiritual results,—the greatest beyond all comparison, is the "Pilgrim's Progress."

Other books have, no doubt, produced results of a similar nature. But where they have been read by thousands, this has been read by millions. Other books of largest circulation have afforded amusement to their readers, and enabled them to while away an hour when lassitude and languor unfitted them for work—almost the only good they either accomplish or attempt, and we do not undervalue even that. But while this has entertained more than any of them, those who read it only for pleasure have often found in its pages the pearl of great price. Men of science have by the electric telegraph brought distant countries into immediate communication, and through or over inaccessible mountains have hewn pathways, and across impassable gulfs have thrown aërial structures, along which, in perfect ease and safety, you may travel at whirlwind speed—their works justly ranking among the greatest achievements of modern times. But this book has brought thousands of souls into immediate communication with heaven, and made plain the way, and become a guide to myriads in their pilgrimage to glory; and, more than any other uninspired book, has helped Christian pilgrims through all the stages of their progress. Statesmen

have improved the laws of nations—warriors have extended their dominion—explorers have added to their territory by the discovery of islands and continents—philosophers have told us of the existence of worlds which had escaped our ken, and made us better acquainted with the matter and movements of our own; but this book has wrought revolutions in human souls, reclaimed them from anarchy and desolation, transformed and beautified them, opened to their wondering gaze, and finally helped them to enter amidst, the glories of the everlasting inheritance. And when we think of these things, and judge them by the highest and truest standard, again we say, in all soberness, we know not of any book written, or any work done, from the days of Bunyan until now, which will compare with this in the services it has rendered to mankind.

The acceptance which his "Pilgrim's Progress" has met with is altogether unparalleled. During the Author's lifetime, many hundred copies are said to have been circulated in England—and that was at a time when books and readers were comparatively scarce. Several editions—some of them got up, as booksellers would say, in very superior style—were published in North America, and translations were issued in French and Flemish, Dutch, Welsh, Gaelic, and Irish. Nor does time show any abatement of its popularity. Among all the competitors for public favour which have since issued from the press, it retains its pre-eminence. There is scarcely a known language into which it has not been rendered. Wherever English is spoken it is familiar as a household word. Both the First and Second Parts may be had together new, and neatly printed, for one penny, showing that notwithstanding the millions in circulation, and the new editions which are constantly appearing, publishers can still reckon on a sale of hundreds of thousands

for one edition alone. It appears in all forms, and is read by all classes. Richly illustrated and elegantly bound, it adorns the drawing-room tables of the wealthy. Well thumbed and sometimes tattered, as if from constant, if not careless, usage, it lies on the shelf or the window-sill of the poor. Children are entranced with the interest of the story,—its tranquil or gloomy scenes—its pictures of danger and conflict—of triumph and despair. Men too illiterate to account for the fascination are attracted to its pages. And learned men, who have little sympathy with its religious purpose, feel the spell of its genius, and are compelled to admire it for the beauty or the awfulness of its creations, its vivid embodiments, its clear insight and keen satire, its terse Saxon style. The young Christian just starting on his course reads it for guidance and encouragement in his own conflicts and perils; the aged saint, lingering for a while on the river's brink, before the messenger summons him into the presence of the King, testifies to the accuracy with which it pictures the serene and mellowed joys of the land of Beulah—the celestial air which the pilgrim breathes, the celestial fragrance which is wafted from on high, and the celestial visitants with whom he holds converse as he nears his journey's end; and the dull eye brightens, and the withered countenance glows with rapture, as by the Pilgrim's passage of the river and entrance at the gates of the city he is led to anticipate his own.

We have said that there is no sign yet of its popularity waning, and we do not expect it ever will. It will continue, we believe, to be of all human productions the one universal household book, so long as men admire the beautiful creations of genius, or need help in their heavenward course. It *may* be rivalled by some; it is not likely to be superseded by any; but as it has increased in popularity hitherto, so it will grow

in favour, and be more and yet more widely read until the very end of time. It is wonderful that any man should have written a book of such universal and enduring popularity; more wonderful still that it should have been written in prison by an uneducated tinker, the supposed descendant of a vagrant tribe—written spontaneously and unconsciously—not as an effort, but as a relief from mental fulness, as the thoughts came crowding up in all their freshness in an untrained but singularly original and fertile mind.

"And thus it was: I writing of the way
And race of saints in this our gospel day,
Fell suddenly into an allegory
About their journey and the way to glory,
In more than twenty things which I set down;
This done, I twenty more had in my crown;
And they again began to multiply

Like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly.
Nay then, thought I, if that you breed so fast,
I'll put you by yourselves, lest you at last
Should prove *ad infinitum*, and eat out
The book that I already am about.

Well, so I did; but yet I did not think
To show to all the world my pen and ink
In such a mode; I only thought to make
I knew not what; nor did I undertake
Thereby to please my neighbour; no, not I:
I did it mine own self to gratify.

Neither did I but vacant seasons spend
In this my scribble; nor did I intend
But to divert myself, in doing this,
From worser thoughts, which make me do amiss.

Thus I set pen to paper with delight,
And quickly had my thoughts in black and white.

For having now my method by the end,
Still as I pull'd, it came; and so I penn'd
It down; until it came at last to be,
For length and breadth, the bigness which you see.

The severity of Bunyan's imprisonment was considerably mitigated by the kindness of his jailer, otherwise the dampness and foulness of the place might not only have interfered with his studies, but have proved fatal to his life. The gaol on Bedford Bridge, where he was confined so long, was one of those whose wretched state started Howard on his benevolent mission among the prisons of Europe. Bunyan, however, was granted indulgences which were denied to other prisoners. Amongst others, he was permitted occasionally to visit his family and the members of his church, and appears to have travelled as far as Leicester and London. The manner in which his clerical adversaries chafed at this showed how bitter was their hatred, and how unrelenting the persecution by which he was assailed. Thus, writing of the early part of his imprisonment, he tells us how his enemies, hearing of his visit to London, were so angry that they had almost cast his jailer out of his place, threatening to indict him and to do what they could against him. They charged Bunyan with going thither to plot and raise division and make insurrection, which, says he, "God knows was a slander; whereupon my liberty was more straitened than it was before, so that I must not look out of the door." At another time, further on in his imprisonment, we suppose, when the slumbering vigilance of his enemies allowed the jailer to follow his kind instincts, a neighbouring priest heard of his being out of prison, and immediately despatched a messenger to obtain evidence of his absence. Bunyan, meanwhile, feeling uneasy at home, had returned sooner than was intended, so that when the messenger demanded:

"Are all the prisoners safe?" the jailer could answer "Yes." "Is John Bunyan safe?" "Yes." Bunyan, on being called, appeared, and, said the jailer afterwards, "You may go out when you will, for you know much better when to return than I can tell you."

Ultimately, about the end of 1672, his release was brought about by the interposition of a Quaker gentleman who had influence with the king, owing to a service he had rendered to him in his troubles, and, much to his honour, exercised that influence on Bunyan's behalf. No sooner was he out of prison than he returned to his beloved work of preaching the gospel statedly in Bedford, and occasionally in other parts of the kingdom. The publication of his "Pilgrim's Progress" greatly increased his popularity, and brought him into greater demand as a preacher than he had ever been before. His popularity as an author, too, became so great, that many began to forge his name to their own productions. Throughout all he remained the same earnest, humble, brave, true-hearted man he had ever been from the day that he knew the grace of God in truth. His pen was busy still as well as his tongue, expounding and testifying to the truth of that gospel whose sustaining power he had so abundantly proved. In the midst of his manifold duties he had still time for rendering special service where special service was required, and in a work of this nature he caught, in his sixtieth year, the cold which brought on his last illness, and thus terminated his eminently useful life. To reconcile a father and son who had quarrelled, he made a journey to Reading on horseback, and on his return by way of London was drenched with rain, and in an exhausted state took refuge in the house of a Christian friend, where he was seized with fatal fever, and ten days afterwards expired.

Little record is left of his demeanour during his last

moments. It is not known if either his wife or children were with him. It is only recorded that he bore with patience and fortitude his sufferings, and expressed his desire to depart and be with Christ. His last words were: "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves. I go to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will, no doubt, through the mediation of His blessed Son, receive me, though a sinner, where I hope we ere long shall meet, to sing the new song, and remain everlastingly happy, world without end. Amen." No words could better become him who had guided so many pilgrims to glory than these words of solicitude for others, and calm confidence as regarded himself. Like him, we have "no doubt" that God received him into the heaven into which he had so often looked with rapture and desire, and that at length he found that for which he almost envied others: "the which, when I had seen, I did wish myself among them."

In the circumstances of his life which we have briefly narrated, some writers profess to find the discipline which was fitted to prepare him for his future work, and to develop the manhood which he afterwards displayed. Without questioning that the circumstances through which he passed exerted on him a disciplinary and formative influence, we must confess that, had we seen the circumstances without knowing the result, we should not have felt very confident of their producing such a man. We do not believe indeed that any circumstances whatever would account for what he was. Great men, though influenced by circumstances, are never produced by them. They are creatures of God designed for a special work, and are not to be accounted for in such easy off-hand fashion, nor are they explainable by us any more than is the creation of a world.

For what he was enabled to do Bunyan was more indebted

to nature and grace than to anything in his surroundings. There was in him first of all the raw material out of which men are made, and that was lighted up, and heated, and quickened, and intensified, by the Divine Spirit's inbreathing. It was the entrance of God's grace into his heart that brought into play his latent powers. And but for that grace, not only might his capacities have continued unknown, but even if exercised, his productions would have lacked some of the qualities on which his power and popularity depend. He was endowed with that subtle, potent, mysterious something, which men call genius, and which, after manifold definitions, still waits to be satisfactorily defined; and that, sanctified by God's grace, and that alone, accounts for all he did.

How much this quality is seen in the vividness and harmony of his creations! It has been said that "the highest miracle of genius is to make things that are not to be as though they were," and this miracle Bunyan has accomplished. The reality and naturalness of his creations every reader must feel. Reading the book in our boyish days, when the judgment did nothing to correct the fancy, we could not shake off the impression of its reality—could not persuade ourselves that every place and person had not a literal existence. How we sympathised with Christian and Faithful in Doubting Castle, as if we could see its stone walls and iron gates, with its merciless keeper, and they were men of flesh and blood that were imprisoned there! How anxious was our suspense while the conflict was pending between Christian and Apollyon! How great our relief when the dragon spread his wings and flew away! Had we actually witnessed the fight on some narrow way along which we were travelling, our excitement could scarcely have been greater. With what solicitude we have traced the pilgrims through the Valley of the Shadow of Death,

fearful lest they should be entrapped in the snares, or slip from the narrow path into the gulf on either side. And in the river we have watched them with breathless interest, and shared in their rejoicings when we saw them safe on the other side. And all the characters he introduces, though some of them be mere embodiments of abstract qualities, are equally living and real. In that gallery of worthies who figure in Vanity Fair he has immortalised his judges and persecutors, and were they living to-day they would be more ready to recognise than to thank him for the accuracy of the likeness. Equally vivid is his representation of Pliable and Obstinate, Mr. Legality and Mr. Worldly Wiseman, By-ends and Demas, and their covetous companions. We know them all, with others of a like and a different stamp. Madame Bubble and Mrs. Timorous, and Mrs. Bat's Eyes, the damsels in the Palace Beautiful, Gaius mine host and Greatheart the guide, are all personal acquaintances, and once known are never to be forgotten.

What a noble fellow is that Pilgrim's guide! A man whose character answers to his name—a Great Heart every inch of him. How manfully and unostentatiously he marches at the head of the pilgrims, the strongest in every difficulty and the bravest in every danger! He can fight about as well as he can preach. He now expounds the doctrine of justification by faith, and now sallies out to slay the giants who molest the pilgrims in their journey. He is such a man, Macaulay thinks, as Bunyan may have seen among the officers of Cromwell's army: a man who could fight as well as preach—a chaplain and captain in one—such a man, we take it, as Bunyan himself was. The author has all the reality and strength which characterise his hero. No carpet knight was the tinker, but a sturdy Christian soldier, capable of holding his own with learned controver-

sialists, and of toiling for his daily bread or suffering imprisonment for conscience' sake. With what unsparing hand he strips off the sanctimonious cloak from the hypocrites who cross his path! How Christian and Faithful extinguish Talkative by insisting on the practical application of truths which he glibly and unctuously propounds! What exquisite satire we have in the speeches of By-ends and his companions! The smooth-tongued time-server from the town of Fair-speech describes his connections and genealogy thus: "Almost the whole town are my kindred, and in particular my Lord Turn-about, my Lord Time-server, my Lord Fair-speech (from whose ancestors that town first took its name), also Mr. Smooth-man, Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Anything; and the parson of our parish, Mr. Two-tongues, was my mother's own brother by father's side, and to tell you the truth I am become a gentleman of good quality; yet my great grandfather was but a waterman, looking one way and rowing another, and I got most of my estate by the same occupation." After the example of his noble ancestry, this gentleman tells us, he never "strives against wind and tide," but is "always most zealous when religion goes in his silver slippers," and "loves much to walk with him in the streets if the sun shines and people applaud." And the poor earth-worms whom he meets, Mr. Hold-the-world, Mr. Money-love, and Mr. Save-all, are said to be old acquaintances of his, as they are of ours, "for in their minority they were schoolfellows, and were taught by one Mr. Gripe-man, a schoolmaster in Love-gain, which is a market town in the county of Coveting, in the north. This schoolmaster taught them the art of getting, either by violence, cozenage, flattery, lying, or by putting on a guise of religion; and these four gentlemen had attained much of the art of their master, so that

they could each of them have kept such a school themselves."

These worthies echo the opinion of By-ends, and in answer to his question one of them proves to the satisfaction of the lot that it is lawful for a man to become zealous in religion for the sake of worldly gain. "For why: First, to become religious is a virtue, by what means soever a man becomes so. Secondly, nor is it unlawful to get a rich wife, or more custom to my shop. Thirdly, besides, the man that gets these by becoming religious, gets that which is good of them that are good, by becoming good himself. So then here is a good wife, and good customers, and good gain; and all these by becoming religious, which is good. Therefore, to become religious to get all these is a good and profitable design."

His speech is applauded by all the others, and their self-complacency continues until Christian comes up, and on the question being put to him, he administers to them a most crushing rebuke, telling them in a few blunt words that their religion was that of heathens and hypocrites—the religion of "Judas the devil" and "Simeon the witch." Such is Bunyan's method of dealing with hypocrites. There is no cant in the man's nature, and he has no tolerance for it when he meets it in others. Those who think to impose upon him by unctuous speech had better keep out of his way. He can use strong words when occasion serves. He can tell us that the gate of Doubting Castle moved "damnable hard;" and his words are never so strong as when he has to pierce with the spear of his scorn some inflated windbag, or, with the pickaxe of his indignation, to overthrow some whited sepulchre.

And yet, like all deep and true natures, he is not less distinguished by the softer than by the sterner qualities. If he can scathe the hypocrites he can also comfort the Feeble-

minds, and the Fearings, and the Ready-to-halts, and the Despondencies, and the Much-afraids. The second part of his "Pilgrim" shows with what tender sympathy he could enter into the feelings of women and children, and how well he understood and could administer the treatment they required. Whenever he is brought into contact with sorrow or with suffering weakness, streams of deep feeling gush from his strong heart like water from the rock. His hand is as gentle in its touch as it is firm in its grip and heavy in its blows. He can describe the anxieties and solicitudes of the womanly heart, and enter into the plays of children, as well as he can depict the wrestling agony and the conscious triumph of the manly soul. Proof this of the greatness and breadth of his nature. The greatest man has thought even for the smallest matter. Nothing that is human, however trifling it may seem, is beneath his notice, because his large nature has room in it for the little things of life as well as for its higher and graver tasks. It is the man who is not, but only thinks himself great, who shrinks from what appears to him womanly or childish, because his small nature is but one-sided, and has no capacity for varied and multifarious tasks.

The minute beauties of the "Pilgrim's Progress" are as noticeable as the grandeur of its conception and the skill with which it is worked out. Every now and again you come on passages which show the true touch of genius, and quiet peaceful scenes are scattered here and there, which show how keen and appreciative was his love of the beautiful in nature and in life. The account he gives of Christian at the Cross speaks to all hearts who have felt the burden of sin and tasted the joy of forgiveness: "He ran thus till he came to a place somewhat ascending; and upon that place stood a cross, and a little below, and in the bottom, a sepul-

chre. So I saw in my dream that just as Christian came up with the *Cross*, his burden loosed from off his shoulders and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do, till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more.

"Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, '*He hath given me rest by His sorrow and life by His death.*' Then he stood still awhile to look and wonder; for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the Cross should thus ease him of his burden. He looked therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks. Now as he stood looking and weeping, behold three shining ones came to him, and saluted him with '*Peace be to thee.*' So the first said to him, '*Thy sins be forgiven;*' the second stripped him of his Rags, and clothed him with change of Raiment; the third also set a mark in his forehead, and gave him a Roll with a Seal upon it, which he bid him look on as he ran, and that he should give it in at the Celestial Gate; so they went their way. Then Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went out singing,

> "'Thus far did I come loaden with my sin;
> Nor could aught ease the grief that I was in,
> Till I came hither. What a place is this!
> Must here be the beginning of my bliss?
> Must here the burden fall from off my back?
> Must here the strings that bound it to me crack?
> Blest Cross! blest Sepulchre! Blest rather be
> The Man who there was put to shame for me.'"

After Christian has climbed the Hill Difficulty, and has arrived at the Palace Beautiful, wearied with his journey, what a touch of genius there is in the description of the chamber in which he sleeps! "Then they discoursed to-

gether till late at night, and after they had committed themselves to their Lord for protection they betook themselves to rest. The Pilgrim they laid in a large upper chamber, whose window opened towards the sunrising; the name of the Chamber was *Peace*, where he slept till break of day, and awoke and sang,



"'Where am I now? Is this the love and care
Of Jesus, for the men that Pilgrims are
Thus to provide? That I should be forgiven,
And dwell already the next door to heaven!'"

What a description of a chamber to be written in the damp dark cell of a prison! Was it his own deprivation which suggested to him by contrast this picture? Or was it not rather the sunshine of the soul, which brightened even the gloom of his prison cell, and made him always sleep with his face towards the sunrising, and wake at the breaking of the day? He took God's peace with him, he tells us, even there, and that converted his dreary dungeon into a chamber whose name was Peace. And his genius in a few strokes gives to all generations this tender and beautiful picture of the light and joy which they experience whose ways please God.

It is at this same Palace Beautiful that "the country birds in spring time sing all day long, in a most curious, melodious note;" and their songs have meaning in them; for as Christiana listens she hears one of them give utterance to words like these:

"Through all my life Thy favour is
So frankly shown to me,
That in Thy house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

And another, as if in response, says,

"For why? The Lord our God is good,
His mercy is for ever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure."

Vieing with this is the picture he gives us of the Valley of Humiliation when traversed by Christiana and her company; and scarcely inferior that of the River of Life, on whose banks Christian and Hopeful refresh themselves. Of the latter he says, "I saw then that they went on their way to a pleasant river, which David the King calls *the River of God*; but John, *the River of the Water of Life.* Now their way lay just upon the bank of the river; here therefore Christian and his companion walked with great delight. They drank also of the water of the river, which was pleasant and enlivening to the weary spirits; besides, on the banks of this river, on either side, were *green Trees*, that bore all manner of fruit; and the leaves of the trees were good for medicine; with the fruit of these trees they were also much delighted; and the leaves they ate to prevent surfeits, and other diseases that are incident to those that heat their blood by travels. On either side of the river was also a meadow, curiously beautified with lilies; and it was green all the year long. In this meadow they lay down and slept, for here they might *lie down safely.* When they awoke, they gathered again the fruit of the trees, and drank again the water of the river; and then lay down again to sleep. Thus they did several days and nights. Then they sang:

"'Behold ye how these crystal streams do glide
(To comfort pilgrims) by the highway side;
The meadows green, besides their fragrant smell,
Yield dainties for them: and he that can tell
What pleasant fruit, yea leaves, these trees do yield,
Will soon sell all that he may buy this field.'"

With a true discernment of the laws of the spiritual life, Bunyan has placed the main difficulties of the Pilgrimage near its commencement, and caused its struggles to take place some time before its close. As they approach that, the configuration of the country, and the atmosphere, and the very light, change, and the Pilgrims enjoy something of the repose, which follows victory. There is a brighter radiance over all the landscape, as if from foreglimmerings of celestial light. On the Delectable Mountains they are exhilarated by the bracing air, and obtain, by the aid of the shepherds, glimpses of the city whither they are travelling. Then, after the Enchanted Ground, where, having enjoyed so much, they are in danger of going to sleep, the land of Beulah comes—a kind of province and colony of heaven before heaven itself is reached—a little heaven on this side the river, like as part of Canaan lay on the east, or on what is called "this side Jordan." Wonderfully attractive is that country, described as it is chiefly in language which the sacred Book supplies. "Entering into the country of Beulah, whose air was very sweet and pleasant, the way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season. Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear on the earth, and heard the voice of turtles in the land. In this country the sun shineth night and day; wherefore this was beyond *the Valley of the Shadow of Death*, and also out of the reach of *Giant Despair;* neither could they from this so much as see *Doubting Castle.* Here they were within sight of the city they were going to: also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof. For in this land the shining ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven. In this land also the contract between the Bride and the Bridegroom was renewed; yea here, *as the Bridegroom*

rejoiceth over the Bride, so did their God rejoice over them. Here they had no want of corn and wine, for in this place they met with abundance of what they had sought for in all their pilgrimage. Here they heard voices from out of the city, loud voices, saying, '*Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh, behold his reward is with Him.*' Here all the inhabitants of the country called them *The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord, Sought out*, etc. As they walked in this land, they had more rejoicing than in parts more remote from the kingdom to which they were bound; and drawing near to the city, they had yet a more perfect view thereof. It was builded of pearls and precious stones, also the street thereof was paved with gold, so that, by reason of the natural glory of the city, and the reflection of the sunbeams upon it, *Christian* with desire fell sick; *Hopeful* also had a fit or two of the same disease. Wherefore here they lay by it a while, crying out because of their pangs, *If you see my Beloved, tell him that I am sick of love.*"

The second part of his "Pilgrim's Progress" suffers from comparison with the first. It is certainly inferior as a whole; and yet it contains parts quite equal, in our estimation, to anything in the other. The characters are drawn with equal force, and their individuality is equally well preserved throughout. Though we pass through the same scenes, we have no oppressive feeling of sameness. Some, indeed, in which we linger longest, we are most loth to leave. We like them even better than we did before. The pilgrims, though not the first we have known, interest us nearly as much as Christian did. Probably the author meant to teach, by the diverse dispositions and tendencies with which he endows them, that Christians are not all of one type; and he actually succeeds in eliciting a liking for the very weakest and most perverse among them. Ready-

to-halt with his crutches; poor Mr. Despondency and his daughter, Much-Afraid; Mr. Fearing, and Mr. Feeble-mind —we have a leaning to them almost as strong as our admiration for Stand-fast and Valiant-for-the-truth; for we feel that their frailties are so human and so much like our own. As for Christiana, she is, in some respects, an improvement on her husband. Her superior refinement disposes us to believe that in the interval the author has, under the influence of religion, become more gentle and refined. Her bearing throughout is that of a true Christian lady. She is not less faithful than her husband, but her tenderness contrasts favourably with his severity, probably because time had somewhat softened the antagonistic feeling which his imprisonment could hardly fail to rouse in the author's mind. And how well becoming in an aged Christian matron —how indicative of a large Christian intelligence and a ripened Christian experience—are those messages she addresses to her friends at her leave-taking, when about to enter the presence of the King! How beautiful too is the account given of their several departures—the words in which the summons is couched—the tokens they receive —the wills they make—and their bearing as they cross the river. Stand-fast's speech in the middle of the river may rank among the finest things Bunyan has written: "This river has been a terror to many; yea, the thoughts of it also have often frightened me. Now, methinks, I stand easy; my foot is fixed upon that upon which the feet of the priests that bare the ark of the covenant stood, while Israel went over this Jordan. The waters, indeed, are to the palate bitter and to the stomach cold; yet the thoughts of what I am going to, and of the conduct that waits for me on the other side, do lie as a glowing coal at my heart.

"I see myself now at the end of my journey, my toil-

some days are ended. I am going now to see that Head that was crowned with thorns, and that Face that was spit upon for me.

"I have formerly lived by hearsay and faith; but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with Him in whose company I delight myself.

"I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of; and wherever I have seen the print of His shoe in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too.

"His name has been to me as a civet-box; yea, sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet; and His countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun. His word I did use to gather for my food, and for antidotes against my faintings. He has held me; and I have kept me from mine iniquities; yea, my steps hath He strengthened in His way.

"Now while he was thus in discourse his countenance changed, his strong man bowed under him; and after he had said, 'Take me, for I come unto Thee,' he ceased to be seen of them.

"But glorious it was to see how the open region was filled with horses and chariots, with trumpeters and pipers, with singers and players on stringed instruments, to welcome the Pilgrims as they went up and followed one another in at the Beautiful Gate of the City."

Of the qualities displayed in his other works our space does not permit us to treat. Those who will look for them may find there, though not in such a remarkable degree, the same features which appear in his "Pilgrim's Progress;" the same vivid realization of spiritual things; the same intense earnestness; the same power of giving colour and form to

abstractions, and of tracing analogies between the outward and the inward, the temporal and the spiritual, the visible and invisible; the same racy Saxon style. His "Holy War" is a more ambitious production even than his "Pilgrim's Progress," and we are not sure that it does not display an equal, or even a superior ability, although, owing to its more complicated movement, and exclusively military figures and phraseology, and its less directly practical tendency, and especially owing to its lack of those tender and beautiful passages with which the other abounds, it is and will always be much less popular. And yet what a marvellous creation it is! What a representation it gives us of the powers and passions and tendencies of the human soul! How the various principles at work within us take shape under his imagination! How vividly we are made to realise what is in ourselves, and the direction in which our various feelings tend! How we stand amazed at the elements of strife which we are made to discern in our own nature, and at the mighty powers which seek possession of our hearts! Verily, it is a marvellous book, enough to secure immortality for its author, had it not been eclipsed by his more popular production.

And how admirable, also, are his practical treatises! Where else can we find such a scriptural theology, couched in language and embodied in form so fitted to commend it to general acceptance, or such clear and forcible presentations of gospel truth? Where in all the English language —unless it be in the pages of his great contemporary, Baxter, and even he, though equally earnest, is not equally successful—can we find such pressing home of that truth upon the heart and conscience? Considering their manifold excellencies, we feel, with Mr. Offor, that these writings alone, apart altogether from such extraordinary productions as "The Pilgrim's Progress" and "The Holy War," "ought

to have handed down his name, with honour and popularity, to the latest posterity."

Even his poetical works are of no mean order, and show what he might have achieved had he devoted his talents to such productions. Some of his later effusions are exquisitely beautiful: very different in this respect from some of the doggerel of his early years. What exquisite lines, for example, are those on the sun-gilt clouds, both in the description they give and in the fancy they express!—

> "Look yonder! ah, methinks mine eyes do see
> Clouds edged with silver, as fine garments be;
> They look as if they saw the golden face
> That makes black clouds most beautiful with grace.
>
> "Unto the saints' sweet incense of their prayer
> These smoky curdled clouds I do compare:
> For as these clouds seem edged or laced with gold,
> Their prayers return with blessings manifold."

Or these on the swallow:

> "This pretty bird, oh! how she flies and sings,
> But could she do so if she had not wings?
> Her wings bespeak my faith, her songs my peace:
> When I believe and sing, my doubtings cease."

Another piece entitled "Of the Child with the Bird at the Bush," though written in words which a child might use, has touches which are not unworthy of the prince of English allegorists. With all its simplicity of language, how true and beautiful, for the most part, is its rhythm! It moves with the most perfect freedom, and in the most musical strains, rippling like a limpid stream over a pebbly bed, with a flow of sound as melodious to the ear as its sentiments are grateful to the heart. Not the least charm of the poem is the manner in which the child's thoughts

and speech are employed to commend the everlasting truth; showing what a master in Israel he is, and how well he was qualified for the varied works of the ministry, who thus seeks in simple and melodious utterances to minister to the lambs of his flock.

We must content ourselves with just one other specimen, where the conception is grander than in the foregoing, although the rhythm is inferior:

"ON THE RISING OF THE SUN.

"Look, look! brave Sol doth peep up from beneath,
Shows us his golden face, doth on us breathe;
He also doth compass us round with glories,
Whilst he ascends up to his highest stories,
Where he his banner over us displays,
And gives us light to see our works and ways.
Nor are we now, as at the peep of light,
To question, is it day, or is it night?
The night is gone, the shadows fled away,
And we now most sure are that it is day.
Our eyes behold it, and our hearts believe it;
Nor can the wit of man in this deceive it.
And thus it is when Jesus shows His face,
And doth assure us of His love and grace."

In closing our brief sketch, we have only to record our conviction that, more than for his possession of genius, Bunyan is to be held in honour for the manner in which he consecrated it to noblest ends. There is no grander spectacle than that of lofty intellect doing homage to the Cross of Christ, the great mind bowing before that Cross with the meekness of a little child, and having no higher ambition than to commend its truths to the reception of mankind, gladly employing for that purpose its powers of imagination and reason, caring not for the honour it may earn for itself, if it may but succeed in showing forth the glory of the Lord.

This Bunyan has done beyond all who could claim to be his equals in intellectual gifts. Others may rival or surpass him in genius, but no man of genius equals him in the extent to which he has guided pilgrims to the skies. For this he has a place in the hearts of thousands, more to be desired than the most wide-sounding fame; and for this he will reap a glorious reward throughout the coming eternity.

And now, thou ingenious and immortal dreamer, farewell! Very pleasant and profitable has been the time we have spent in thy company. There is that in thy life, still more than in thy writings, which stirs all that is best and holiest in our nature. We feel conscious of thy priceless worth to the people, to whom, being dead, thou art yet speaking. And while we pray that many may be charmed by thy pictures, and induced to venture on the pilgrimage thou hast described so well, we thank God, who, in troublous times, did raise thee up to become through after ages a teacher of His church and a blessing to the world.

ANDREW FULLER,

The Theologian.

THE subject of this sketch occupied a prominent place among the group of distinguished men who at the close of the last and the commencement of the present century shed lustre on their denomination. Among such names as those of Pearce, Ryland, Sutcliffe, Carey, Marshman, Foster, and Hall, his fairly takes its place as the representative of massive intellect, of lofty piety and integrity, and of distinguished service to the cause of Christ. If he be not the foremost of the group, he is at least abreast of the greatest; not so lofty as some of them, nor of the same exquisite quality and finish, but the sturdiest and most enduring of them all. With little of the ornamental in his nature or productions, he is a man of rare serviceable qualities, which, with singleness of purpose and untiring zeal, he consecrates to noblest ends. With an intellect massive in its proportions, firm in its grasp, clear in its vision, if not very wide in its range, but showing something of the narrowness of insufficient culture, with strong common sense, a judgment generally sound, except when it becomes

the slave of a logic strong in its links, but insufficient in its premisses; with a gravity of character which gave weight to his words, he was enabled, both by his ministerial and official labours as honorary secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, to exert an influence on his denomination greater than was wielded by any even of his more gifted contemporaries. The Mission at whose birth he ministered, and whose infancy he nursed, owes to his instrumentality not a little of the success with which God has crowned it. If Carey's zeal in the first instance, and afterwards his brilliant linguistic attainments, all employed more or less directly in the furtherance of the great work to which he had consecrated his life, kindled and kept alive the enthusiasm of its friends, Fuller's judicious, persevering, and self-denying labours established and conducted the organizations without which enthusiasm may be expended to little purpose. If the one nobly went down into the pit of heathenism to dig out of that deep, dark quarry living stones for the spiritual temple, the other has nobly and untiringly held the rope, never failing to respond to the expectations of the brethren who had gone out in simple reliance on the faithfulness of God and the co-operation and sympathy of His people. And did we now seek a revival of the spirit of former times, we hardly know which would be more conducive to its promotion —the raising up of Careys to labour abroad, or of Fullers to visit the churches at home.

It is not so much for his work as Mission Secretary, however, that we now call attention to this good and great man's life, as for the services he rendered to the churches of both his own and other denominations by his influence on the theology of his time. We do not attempt here to hold the balance between this and his services as Mission Secretary, nor do we pronounce the one superior to

the other. We select this for notice because, while there are others of our Worthies who are still more intimately associated with missions, and in connection with whose labours his cannot be altogether lost sight of, his influence as a theologian is unrivalled, whether among the men of his own or any other denomination, either during or since his time.

To whatever this influence may be owing, the fact of its existence—partially even now, though perhaps to a less extent than formerly, and it may be also in waning degree—will hardly be denied. Nor will it be questioned, by any whose opinion we care to dispute, that that influence, formerly, at least, was most salutary in its nature. His teaching shook to its foundations the hyper-Calvinism which forbade the preaching of the gospel to sinners, and practically, if not avowedly, denied the responsibility and free agency of man; and if it presented a too stern aspect to what it may have deemed an equally dangerous Arminianism, and failed frequently to understand that which it condemned, it only on that account gained the readier acceptance among those who would have taken fright at anything which appeared to be at variance with what they called "the doctrines of grace." Few preachers now can imagine the existence of trammels which would prevent their addressing unbelievers, and have difficulty, therefore, in properly appreciating the emancipation which was effected when it was shown that the free proclamation of the gospel to sinners was not at variance with the sovereignty of God in the salvation of men. Our theology may not be perfect yet; but in our opinion it presents a marvellous improvement on that which Fuller had to confront. And if we deem it an advantage that, except in obscure circles, into which the light slowly penetrates, our right to preach the gospel to all men is never

questioned, not a little of our gratitude is due to the man who boldly led the way to the light and freedom which it is our privilege to enjoy. The application of the term "Fullerism" to the moderate Calvinism which constitutes the orthodoxy of the day, and of "Fullerite" to those who preach it, is enough to show how largely we are indebted to his teaching and influence for the improvement that has taken place.

But it was not only as between one section of Christians and another that Fuller rendered service to theology, but as between Christianity and its infidel assailants. He not only helped to arrange and fix the articles; he strengthened the defences of the faith. He not only cleansed the courts of Zion from the errors which had found lodgment there; he built her walls, and repaired her bulwarks, and told the towers thereof, defending her against her foes, as well as correcting the mistakes and rebuking the follies of her friends. We have no wish to estimate the relative value of these services. With some the latter will be thought to deserve the highest meed of praise, and to present the strongest claim to the gratitude of the church. It was the most urgently called for because of the extent to which a heresy, which clothed itself in extremely orthodox forms, was choking up the channels of Christian life, and paralyzing all activity, and because the friends of Christianity are more capable of doing it harm than its avowed adversaries. With others the latter will probably be deemed the more efficient performance. The "Gospel its own Witness," owing, it may be, to its being the production of his more practised pen and more matured judgment, takes higher rank, at least in the estimation of many, and is certainly more widely read, and we believe read with greater interest, than his "Gospel worthy of all Acceptation." It deals with a more frequently

recurring evil: for while a heresy once thoroughly exploded will gradually lose its power, and of itself die away before increasing light, the natural enmity of the human heart is always prompting to fresh assaults on the foundations of our faith.

Fuller's early circumstances and training were such as, in the common estimation, would be little likely to fit him for rendering such distinguished service. Brought up as a ploughman's boy, following the plough until he has somewhat advanced into manhood, with few books and little opportunity for earnest or protracted study, with no access to intellectual circles, surrounded from his youth by the religious atmosphere which prevailed in the eastern counties of England, who could have imagined that he was the man who, above all others, was to leave his mark on the theology of the age;—that he would do more than any other to widen its range, as well as to define its boundaries and strengthen its defences;—that he would liberalise so many of the churches, and wake up their slumbering members to originate and sustain one of the noblest evangelistic enterprises of modern times? Surely, it is to some of his compeers—the learned Rylands, or the philosophical and eloquent Halls, or the catholic and seraphic Pearces, or to some other of the great and gifted men of his time—that we should most naturally look for such achievements. Fuller, except for what he is in himself, is the last of all his associates to whom we should have thought them possible.

It is a very noticeable fact that so many of his co-religionists, who have attained to highest distinction in their respective lines, have been men who were altogether destitute of what are called early advantages. The two in this gallery who have influenced beyond any other man the religious

feeling and thought of their denomination and their country —John Bunyan and Andrew Fuller—were both, in the technical sense of the word, unlearned men. Neither of them enjoyed the advantages of an academical or collegiate education. The latter statement is equally true of Carey, who, learned as he afterwards became, received none of his learning within college walls. John Foster, a profounder thinker than any of them, was very similarly situated: although he passed through a brief course of training, his academical attainments were almost *nil.*

We notice these facts, not in depreciation of a thorough and sound education, believing, as we do, that the work of Christ demands and deserves that His servants should bring to it all their powers in the highest state of efficiency. Some of the names in this series are sufficient to frown down any attempt to depreciate learning. The highest culture will not be thought incompatible with originality of conception and freedom of thought by any one who has but a scanty acquaintance with the writings of John Milton, albeit he had an imagination which no training could fetter, and the history of his college life is not without signs that its restraints were painfully felt. Robert Hall's fame as a preacher is enough to redeem a learned ministry from the imputation of dulness, even where conception and diction are alike faultless and majestic; although, in part owing to his fastidious taste, and partly to his nervous susceptibility, he influenced less than either Fuller or Foster the theology of his time.

Such facts may, indeed, suggest inquiry as to the possibility of securing the unquestionable advantages of a good college curriculum, combined with a more careful development of individual peculiarities—the promotion of well-regulated habits of thought with greater daring and independence on the part of the thinker—the impartation of culture and

polish along with the conservation of power; for unquestionably the advantages of early training in Fuller's case would have been too dearly purchased at the cost of destroying the mental independence which made him the greatest theological reformer of his time.

In Fuller's case, however, as in Bunyan's, the services he rendered are not traceable to his early circumstances, but to the fact that God had set His mark upon him, endowing him with a degree of mental strength which no training could impart, nor the want of it suppress. Possibly he might have done even better service had he enjoyed a more liberal education. It is not difficult to trace in him a want of culture—we beg pardon—a want of "the higher culture," for that is the slang phrase used by the supercilious, who have read Matthew Arnold, and imbibed the spirit, and consider themselves entitled to look with contempt on all who are not devoted disciples, of that great apostle of "sweetness and light." Fuller's culture was defective. But, to use a figure borrowed from his early occupation, his mind was like a great tract of deep loamy virgin soil, capable, with slight cultivation, of producing a crop such as the higher culture of his time, or the still higher culture of our own, could not gather from those small minds which resemble the little patches of land that pass for gardens in a crowded city, or the still smaller window-sill flower pots and boxes of soil, on which so much culture is expended in vain.

Fuller's resemblance to Bunyan extended to his early religious experience. The subject of deep and powerful convictions, he wrote strong things against himself, which testify, however, more to the sensitiveness of his own conscience than to his pre-eminent wickedness. Although not free from the vices of boys of his class, the early age at which his conversion took place renders it impossible that he

could have gone very far in that direction. And the severe condemnation which he pronounces on himself, when he afterwards records his experience, shows what he was, not as tried by any human standard, but as he appeared to himself, under the convincing influence of the Divine Spirit.

Like Bunyan, he remained for a considerable time in a state of conviction, his painful sense of sin being sometimes relieved by gleams of hope, sometimes forgotten in the pursuit of worldly pleasures, but never altogether leaving him, from the time he was thirteen until he was about sixteen years of age; at which time he says, "My convictions revisited me, and brought on such a concern about my everlasting welfare as issued, I trust, in my real conversion." This happy change, he seems to think, might have been consummated sooner but for the defective religious teaching to which he had been accustomed to listen. That teaching, as may be supposed, seeing it was not intended for sinners, presented no clear exposition of the way of salvation. To this defect he bears touching testimony in the account which he gives of the great change:—

"I now found rest for my troubled soul: and I reckon that I should have found it sooner if I had not entertained the notion of my having no warrant to come to Christ without some previous qualification. This notion was a bar that kept me back for a time, though through Divine drawings I was enabled to overleap it. As near as I can remember, in the early part of these exercises, when I subscribed to the justice of God in my condemnation, and thought of the Saviour of sinners, I had then relinquished every false confidence, believed my help to be only in Him, and approved of salvation by grace alone through His death: and if at that time I had known that any poor sinner might warrantably have trusted in Him for salvation, I conceive I should

have done so, and have found rest to my soul sooner than I did. I mention this, because it may be the case with others, who may be kept in darkness and despondency by erroneous views of the gospel much longer than I was.

"From this time, my former wicked courses were forsaken. I had no manner of desire after them. They lost their influence upon me. To those evils, a glance at which before would have set my passions in a flame, I now felt no inclination. 'My soul,' said I, with joy and triumph, 'is as a weaned child!' I now knew experimentally what it was to be dead to the world by the cross of Christ, and to feel an habitual determination to devote my future life to God my Saviour, and from this time considered the vows of God as upon me."

The genuineness of the change he had undergone was proved by his altered course of life. In March 1770, he witnessed the administration of the ordinance of baptism, and about a month afterwards was himself baptized, and admitted a member of the church at Soham. As was then expected of a professor of religion, and in accordance with his own convictions, he, although only sixteen years of age, relinquished the games in which he had formerly taken a distinguished part, and, in order that he might be free from temptation, left home while they lasted, and went on a visit to some friends, where he could spend his time in profitable spiritual reflection. And not only in this, but in his devout habits, and control of his temper, he gave evidence that he was the subject of Divine grace. This is illustrated in the following extract, which well reflects the character of the man:—

"Within a day or two," he says, "after I had been baptized, as I was riding through the fields, I met a company of young men. One of them especially, on my having

passed them, called after me in very abusive language, and cursed me for having been 'dipped.' My heart instantly rose in a way of resentment; but, though the fire burned, I held my peace; for before I uttered a word, I was checked with this passage, which occurred to my mind: 'In the world ye shall have tribulation.' I wept and entreated the Lord to pardon me; feeling quite willing to bear the ridicule of the wicked, and to go even through great tribulation if, at last, I might but enter the kingdom. In this tender frame of mind I rode some miles, thinking of the temptations I might have to encounter. Amongst others, I was aware of the danger of being drawn into any acquaintance with the other sex which might prove injurious to my spiritual welfare. While poring over these things, and fearful of falling into the snares of youth, I was led to think of that passage: 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.' This made me weep for joy; and for forty-five years I have scarcely entered on any serious engagement without thinking of these words, and entreating the Divine direction. I have been twice married, and twice settled as the pastor of a church, which were some of the leading ways in which I had to acknowledge the Lord; and in each, when over, I could say: 'My ways have I declared, and Thou heardest me.'"

The church at Soham which Fuller joined, although very small, was not exactly characterized by the purity which is sometimes supposed to be the accompaniment of littleness. It was affected by the dry-rot of Antinomianism, which was then rampant in the eastern counties, where it still retains its hold, stubbornly resisting, and slowly retreating before, the advancing light. Shortly after Fuller joined the church, a member was found guilty of drunkenness. Fuller,

actuated by the sensibility of the young convert, and by a regard for the honour of Christ, remonstrated with the offending member, and was met with a reply which greatly shocked him, and started his mind on trains of thought that, fostered and stimulated as they were by subsequent proceedings, led to much. The man pleaded that his drunkenness "was not his fault—that he could not save himself from sin, and that though his accuser bore so hard upon him, he was not his own keeper." The plea was in strict accordance with the theology of the church, and became the subject of discussions more curious than edifying. The minister justified, and even commended Mr. Fuller highly for his remonstrance, and in vindication of his position propounded the ingenious theory that "we certainly could keep ourselves from *open* sins. We had no power to do things *spiritually* good; [but] we had the power both to obey the will of God and to disobey it." This compromise, however, between the pastor's sense of right and his theological fidelity, did not satisfy the church, the majority of whose members expressed their disapproval both of Mr. Fuller's remonstrance and the minister's defence, excusing the former on the ground of his youth, but censuring the latter in a manner which led to his resignation of his office, and threatened to dissolve the church.

These things are noticeable here chiefly because of their influence on Mr. Fuller's mind. They may be taken as an illustration of how "great events from trivial causes spring," and how Providence allows evil to go to excesses by which it destroys itself. Fuller's common-sense brushed away the cobweb arguments by which wrong was not only excused, but vindicated; and though it was some time before he found a satisfactory solution of some of the questions by which his mind was now agitated (for the man always moved with

cautious steps), the incident awakened those trains of thought which issued in clearer, sounder views of truth—in the productions which he afterwards gave to the world, and, though less directly, in the part he took in the formation and conduct of the Baptist Missionary Society, with much else which cannot be noticed here.

It says not a little for his personal character, that it was this very church, which he had been the means of agitating and partly scattering, that first invited him to assume the office of pastor. After the resignation of the minister above referred to, one of the members, a Mr. Dyer, with whom Fuller became exceedingly intimate, usually conducted the service, the devotional parts being sustained by the different members. In these Fuller took part, and soon became known to the members as distinguished for a gravity and thoughtfulness beyond his years: so that one day, when Mr. Dyer, who was indisposed, intimated to him that he expected him to take his place on the following Sunday, they all seem to have acquiesced in the arrangement. This first public effort was soon followed by others, which proved so acceptable, that the church began to think of securing his constant and permanent ministrations by inviting him to the pastorate. It was not very easy for a young man who had grown up among them,—had received no special training for the work,—had not even the prestige with which a short residence at college might have invested him, to fill such an office. He might well fear that our Lord's words would be verified in his experience, "A prophet is not without honour save in his own country." Nevertheless, after prayerful consideration, he accepted the office, and was enabled to fill it to the satisfaction of all concerned. Never did any one occupying a lofty and prominent sphere perform its duties with greater conscientiousness and fidelity

than he brought to the humble work of this village pastorate. The spiritual welfare of his people was the object of his most earnest solicitude, and was most laboriously and prayerfully sought. His intense devotion to their interests may be inferred from the fact that, though his income from the church was only fifteen pounds a year, which by attempting different occupations he in vain tried to supplement, so that he was forced to draw from his private resources, he declined for two years the most pressing invitations to leave; and only when, after much thought and prayer, he became convinced that it presented a field of greater usefulness, did he consent to enter on a larger sphere.

His removal to Kettering, the town which is now immortally associated with his name, and through him with one of the most important movements of modern times, the formation of *The Baptist Missionary Society*, took place in October 1782; and was soon followed by some of those events which made him known not only among his own people, but rendered him famous among the members of other denominations. The hyper-Calvinism of his time, which forbade the preaching of the gospel to sinners, and virtually denied the freedom and responsibility of man, was repugnant to his strong common-sense, and on examination was found to be not less at variance with the teaching of God's Word. The churches with which he had been more immediately connected were so overrun with it, that any one in mental perplexity, as he himself had been, could receive no help or light from their teaching. It was not an easy thing to assail it in its stronghold. The *odium theologicum* is never so fierce as in the defenders of orthodox error. To differ from them is to brave their bitterest anathemas. Immorality

of life may be excused by them, but unsoundness of creed never; and Fuller had to look for social ostracism, ecclesiastical excommunication, and desertion by his most intimate friends, if he dared to teach otherwise than they approved. But he was not the man to be deterred by such a prospect from giving utterance to the thing that was in him. The belief which he had embraced, after careful and prayerful investigation of the sacred oracles, he would dare to express, be the consequences what they might. Accordingly, shortly after his settlement at Kettering, he published his first important production, "The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation," in which he assails the ultra-Calvinist position, and proves that it is man's duty to believe whatsoever God testifies,—that his inability to believe is only moral, not physical, so that the only hindrance to his believing is his unwillingness; and that, therefore, to preach the gospel and exhort men to believe is the duty of every minister of Christ. The publication of this volume involved him in controversies not a few, with hyper-Calvinists on the one hand, and some who have been designated Arminians on the other.

It is not necessary that we should agree with all Mr. Fuller's theological views in order that we may see his merits as a controversialist. We may think that on some points the advantage in argument is with some of his opponents. We may regard his theology as not only an inadequate and imperfect, but, in some respects, inaccurate representation of God's relation to sinful men, and yet not the less we may recognise his clear vision, his keen logical acumen, his masterly grip of a subject, his candour towards his opponents—no less remarkable than his power to seize the weak points in their position, and turn their blunders to account. It were easy to give specimens in

which these qualities appear, but as our space is too limited to admit of this, we must content ourselves with referring our readers to his published works.

Neither does our failure to accept all his theology imply any want of appreciation of the splendid services which he rendered to the Church of Christ. Great is the debt she owes to him for his clear exposition and able defence of a theology which freed her from the trammels that impeded her action, and roused her from her guilty indifference to the state of a perishing world. And if we cannot claim for him that his teaching contained the whole truth, and is therefore entitled to be made the standard of orthodox belief, our conclusion is only in harmony with the fact that God's truth is too vast to be fully grasped by any human intellect. Our own impression of him is, that he was more of a reasoner than a seer, more capable of exposing an error than discovering a truth, better able to demolish a false system than to frame a true; and that while he thus led the churches out of the Egypt of their bondage, he did not quite conduct them into the land of rest. Without giving less prominence to what are called the "doctrines of grace," it appears to us that his teaching might have set forth more clearly and fully the Divine yearning over the salvation of the lost as represented in the father waiting for the return of his wandering son, and the shepherd going into the wilderness after the lost sheep, and the Redeemer's tears over the doomed city of Jerusalem, and manifold other scriptures which need not be quoted here. We rejoice to believe that the theology which insists on this is spreading in the churches, because we take it to be more in harmony with Scripture than that which is generally called "Fullerism;" and although it does not get rid of all difficulty, nor profess to get rid of all difficulty, by the view which it takes of the

Divine procedure, it at least has this recommendation—that it does not accept of a solution which detracts from the Divine goodness, but is content to recognise the inability of man fully to understand the ways of God, and to wait until He Himself may be pleased to make them plain. It is more Calvinism than "Fullerism," in that it connects all things with the Divine purpose, and less so in that it refuses to set limits to the Divine love. It maintains that all gracious feeling in man originates with God—does not even admit of the possibility of its existence without Divine influence; but at the same time attributes to the freewill with which God, in His wisdom and goodness, has endowed man, his fatal and final rejection of the Divine overtures; thus setting no limits to the Divine goodness, and neither leaving to the penitent ground for boasting, nor to the impenitent ground for complaint. This theology will yet supersede "Fullerism," because more in harmony with New Testament teaching, and with the character of the Infinite One.

Still, it would ill become us either to complain or to wonder that a man brought up, as we have seen him to be, in the narrowest school—situated in a locality where he had little opportunity of becoming acquainted with any broader theology than that school held and taught—limited in his reading to a very scanty library composed chiefly of books fitted to confirm him in the theology of his early years—accustomed to associate with those who held that theology most tenaciously, and regarded any who differed from them as enemies or traitors to the truth—should not all at once have attained to those broader and sounder views of truth which have been arrived at by the thinking and intelligence of a later and more favoured age. It is no slight proof of his mental vigour, and independence, and courage, that he was able to break the trammels in which at first he was

compelled to move, and not only to think for himself when there was no one either to stimulate or to guide him, but to present his thoughts in such a clear and forcible manner, as to influence and almost to revolutionise the theology of his denomination, and to a large extent of his country, through his own and succeeding generations,—giving his name to a system of doctrine which men who had enjoyed a hundredfold his advantages were content to embrace. This honour no one can deny to him. Even those who object to "Fullerism," bear testimony, by their very use of the word, to the masterly qualities and the powerful and widespread influence of the man.

Nothing, as we have already intimated, can exceed Fuller's fairness to an opponent,—the clear and candid manner in which he presents the argument he is about to refute, or, his premisses being conceded, the completeness of the refutation he offers. Although keen in his retorts, cutting in his sarcasm, and merciless in his exposure of fallacies and in turning the admissions of his opponents against themselves, he is, nevertheless, a fair and courteous—for his time, indeed, a remarkably fair and courteous—controversialist; so that if at any time he errs, it is not because he is carried away by the heat of controversy, but rather because the excellence of his logic serves to narrow, if not to cloud, his vision. A less clear and accurate reasoner might have a more penetrating insight into truth. Because the subject on which he reasons in his controversy with Mr. Sandemann, Mr. Maclean, and Philanthropos, being, in fact, the origin of the spiritual life, cannot be thoroughly comprehended by finite minds, nor presented in logical formulæ, his premisses are necessarily imperfect, and the more close and sound his reasoning therefore, the more surely does it lead him astray, and at the same time the more inevitable do his conclusions appear to those

who agree with his postulates. Starting with him you can hardly fail to accompany him in every step he takes, and, ultimately, to arrive with him at his goal. A less certain might, in some instances, prove a safer guide.

As an illustration of the strength of his logical faculty, and at the same time of the defectiveness of his premisses, we might refer to the position he takes in representing the belief of the gospel as a meritorious act, and, therefore, an act of which no unregenerate man is capable. We are not quoting his words, but only describing his position as it appears to ourselves. In that position there is no doubt much that is unassailable; and the logical manner in which he conducts his argument is much to be admired. But with all our admiration, there appears to us to be qualifying considerations which he does not sufficiently weigh. Although faith, including all that it involves, may fairly be designated a righteous or holy exercise, the mere crediting of a testimony which is the beginning of the exercise has nothing very holy or meritorious in it; and a good deal might be said to prove that it is from the influence of the testimony on the mind that receives it that the holiness which is involved in faith springs. Moreover, the Scriptures fairly interpreted do not teach that every action of an unregenerate man is necessarily sinful, any more than is every act of an imperfect believer. An unregenerate man may sacrifice his own life in attempting to save the life of another; and the most inexorable logic will never convince men that in doing so he is guilty of sin. It may be contended that the motive which actuates him is not the highest, and that the action is defective on that account, and, being defective, is sinful. It may be contended further that as the man is so are his acts, and that he, being sinful, his acts are sinful also,—that a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean. But the very same argument

might be applied to the actions of an imperfect believer; whose motives, to say the least, are mingled; and it might be contended that the action, being prompted by mingled motives, and springing from an imperfect source, was necessarily defective, and therefore sinful. This argument, thus applied, however, would be too much for Mr. Fuller's purpose, as it would prove that all imperfect regenerate men were equally, with the unregenerate, incapable of believing. We venture to think that if Mr. Fuller had not been contending with an opponent, his strong common-sense would have led him to take quite a different view of the passages he quotes. He would then have seen that the ploughing which is sin is ploughing with a wicked intent; and that the "prayer which is an abomination to the Lord" is the prayer of a man who, notwithstanding his prayer, persists in his wickedness, not the prayer of a man who is turning from sin, as is the case of one who believes the gospel. He would have seen that such a prayer, however great the wickedness from which it comes, and though it be only the cry of a soul that feels its own misery, so far from being an abomination, is music in the ears of God, and causes joy in the angelic ranks—not indeed because there is any merit in it, but because it is the harbinger of the sinner's home-coming. He would have seen that the theory for which he was so strenuously contending was in direct contradiction to those Scriptures which make the enjoyment of life contingent on faith, and trace the regeneration of a soul to the instrumentality of the truth believed; such as, "He that believeth not shall not see life." "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth." "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever; . . . and this is the word which, by the gospel, is preached unto you." "In whom

also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe in His name." He would have seen that his theory placed him in a worse dilemma than that into which he attempted to force his opponent. He would have seen that, if men are regenerated before, and in order to faith, it follows that they are saved without the gospel, and that, for the purpose of salvation, therefore, the gospel may be dispensed with. He would have seen—and it is marvellous that a man so clear-minded did not see—the absurdity of the position that man's enmity to God must be overcome before he will believe the gospel, when, in fact, the gospel is represented as the means employed for overcoming his enmity, and is therefore called "the word of reconciliation." Had he taken a wider view of the data on which his arguments should have been based, his logical mind would have prevented his arriving at a conclusion so directly at variance with the teaching of the Word of God, and so stultifying to the Divine procedure. It seems scarcely possible that one capable of reasoning so well should have held that God had provided, for the purpose of reconciling men to Himself, an instrument which cannot influence them until they are reconciled; that while the Scriptures speak of their being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, they must be reconciled before they will believe in His death; that while by His cross the Saviour is to attract all men to Himself, they must be attracted before they will yield to His attractive influence. Such a conclusion, we fancy, would have appeared to him more revolting than anything he saw in his opponent's theory, and was certainly at variance with his whole course of action. His work in connection with the Baptist Missionary Society would have been absurd on any theory which

made the spiritual life of men to precede, and therefore to be in its production independent of, their reception of the gospel of Christ.

It would have been better, in our estimation, had the controversialists on both sides been less metaphysical, and confined themselves more to the statements of God's Word—each side recognising those which favoured the other, and not confining themselves exclusively to those which favoured their own. Metaphysics supply no satisfactory settlement of the question relating to the Divine action on the one hand, and the freedom of the will on the other. Nor does either the Calvinistic or the Arminian system cover all the facts of the case. We may admit with Mr. Maclean that faith is simply a mental act, in its initiatory stage, at least, seeing it begins with crediting a testimony, and yet hold that moral qualities may precede and account for it. Or we may believe with Mr. Fuller that it is attributable to a certain state of mind, without admitting that that state of mind implies any moral virtue or excellence for which the man may take credit to himself. The motive which first moves to the reception of the gospel may be nothing higher than dissatisfaction with the present, or apprehension about the future. Present loss or disappointment, the dread of coming misery, may induce, and do very often induce, a readiness to give heed to the message which promises satisfaction in this world and enjoyment in the next. But though such readiness may betoken a regard for his own interests, it does not imply any moral virtue or excellence, or any feeling for which a man, whether he traces it to the grace of God or not, can credit himself with having acted a meritorious part in the matter of his own salvation. He cannot even say that he hath made himself to differ from others; for, without his having been the subject of any moral transformation, or any

work of grace, his dissatisfaction and dread may be the result of a line of outward events, near or remote, with which he has had, and could have had, nothing whatever to do.

On the other hand, Mr. Fuller, in pushing this question, "Who hath made thee to differ?" seems to us to overlook facts on the other side. It is a fact which he seems to overlook, that the Scriptures do speak of some men as acting a worse and more culpable part than others, without attributing that worse part to the withholding of the Divine grace with which those others were favoured. Some will rise up in judgment against others, and condemn them. Some would have repented had the means been used with them which were used with others who did not repent. The rejection of the gospel by the Pharisees, while the publicans received it, is attributed, not to the withholding of Divine grace, but to their greater stubbornness of will and hardness of heart. Salvation is attributed to Divine grace. Perdition is not attributed to Divine withholding, but to human resistance. Questions relating to the more remote or the primary springs of action, whichever view be taken, had better not be raised, because of starting difficulties about which Scripture is silent, and of which metaphysics confessedly supply no satisfactory solution.

As dealing with Deists, in his "Gospel its own Witness," and with Socinians, in his "Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Compared," and his rejoinders to the criticisms they called forth, his reasoning appears to us much more sound and satisfactory. Not only had he the right side of the question in both cases, but the subjects were of a nature which he was better able to handle. We do not say that he displays more ability in them than in his earlier productions; but the subjects, being more objective, furnished more exclusive

scope for the exercise of the logical faculty by which he was pre-eminently distinguished, and required less metaphysical discernment. Dealing less with mental processes which no one can satisfactorily analyze, least of all one whose knowledge of mental science is comparatively limited, they give less occasion for betraying the defects of his early training. On the broad ground of Scripture and of fact he treads with surer step than was possible to him when moving in the region of metaphysical subtlêties. In admirable manner, in the "Gospel its own Witness," by an illustration which has often done duty since, he disposes of the Deistical and Socinian objection to the doctrine of mediation. The passage is much too long for our brief space, but we commend it to the perusal of our readers as a lucid and convincing justification of "the ways of God to men," well fitted to set at rest all questioning as to the reasonableness of evangelical teaching.

On the whole, we like the treatise in which it appears the best of all Mr. Fuller's writings. And we know not which to admire most—the chapter which is devoted to this, or the following, in which he shows "the consistency of the Scripture doctrine of redemption with the modern idea of the magnitude of creation." This chapter is said to have suggested Dr. Chalmers' famous astronomical discourses; and it certainly contains in germ, and in form no less convincing, most of the thoughts which the great preacher has amplified and clothed with the hues of his glowing and exuberant imagination. Nor is the chapter without passages which, though they lack all the rhetorical gush for which the Scotch orator was so distinguished, are, for their chastened and dignified eloquence, not less attractive than his more gorgeous creations. How fine, for example, is the following often-quoted peroration: "And now I appeal to the intelligent, the serious, and the candid reader, whether there be any truth in what

Mr. Paine asserts, that to admit that 'God created a plurality of worlds, at least as numerous as what we call stars, renders the Christian system of faith at once little and ridiculous, and scatters it in the wind like feathers in the air.' On the contrary, it might be proved that every system of philosophy is little in comparison of Christianity. Philosophy may expand our ideas of creation; but it neither inspires a love to the *moral* character of the Creator, nor a well-grounded hope of eternal life. Philosophy, at most, can only place us at the top of Pisgah; there, like Moses, we must die: it gives us no possession of the good land. It is the province of Christianity to add, 'All is yours.' When you have ascended to the height of human discovery, there are things, and things of infinite moment, too, that are utterly beyond its reach. Revelation is the medium, and the only medium, by which, standing, as it were, on 'Nature's Alps,' we discover things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and of which it hath never entered into the heart of man to conceive."

Such passages as this show that not only was he gifted with strong argumentative powers, but was by no means deficient in the imaginative faculty, although a sound judgment kept it always under proper restraint. Accordingly, it was not in controversy only that Mr. Fuller excelled. His power in presenting positive truth was not less conspicuous than his power in grappling with error. His sermons are distinguished by soundness of judgment, and by an eminently practical tendency. Some preachers may have been more original, and not a few may have been more brilliant; but few have surpassed him in the power of conveying sound scriptural instruction. His texts are not pegs on which to hang up his own speculations, nor pivots around which he gathers all kinds of curious and interesting matter from whatever source it may be drawn, nor puzzles which ingenuity tries

to solve, and exercises itself in discovering for them all kinds of fanciful meanings and applications; but Divine utterances, whose true meaning is to be prayerfully discovered and applied. Hence, with masterly hand, he lays hold of great principles, and so arranges and marshals them as to bring them to bear with concentrated force on the end he has in view. His manner of dealing with a text is indicated by three questions. What? Why? What then? What is its meaning? Why is this its meaning? What follows, if this be its meaning? That is to say, he first expounds or illustrates, then establishes, then applies, or improves. And in doing this, his strong common-sense and his earnest practical purpose are both conspicuously displayed. He objects to sermons in which the thoughts are presented without order, and is careful that his own shall never merit that censure. To a young preacher he says: "Now, having examined the force of every term of importance (in the text, that is) by comparing it with the opposite idea or ideas, you will find yourself in possession of a number of interesting thoughts, which you will consider as so many recruits, and having noted them down as they occurred, your next business is to *arrange* them in order, or to give each thought that place in your discourse which it will occupy to the greatest advantage. Many sermons are a *mob* of ideas: they contain very good sentiments, but they have no object in view; so that the hearer is continually asking the preacher, Very true, very true; but what then? What is it you are aiming at? What is this to the purpose? A preacher, then, if he would interest a judicious hearer, must have an object at which he aims, and must never lose sight of it throughout his discourse. This is what writers on these subjects call *a unity of design;* and this is a matter of greater importance than studying well-turned periods, or forming pretty expressions.

It is this that nails the attention of an audience. *One thing at once* is a maxim in common life, by which the greatest men have made the greatest proficiency. Shun, therefore, a multitude of divisions and subdivisions. He who aims to say everything in a single discourse, in effect says nothing. Avoid making a particular of every thought. Unity of design may be preserved consistently with various methods; but the thing itself is indispensable to good preaching."

Still less tolerance has he for a kind of preaching which is now much resorted to by preachers of a certain type, and greatly liked by a large class of hearers—the preaching which exercises its ingenuity in discovering spiritual resemblances or analogies in historical facts. "Some godly men," he considers, are too much infected with this disease, and thus remonstrates with them—"Let me entreat you, then, my friend, to consider whether, when you turn plain historic facts into allegory, you treat the Word of God with becoming reverence. Can you seriously think the Scriptures to be a book of riddles and conundrums, and that a Christian minister is properly employed in giving scope to his fancy, in order to discover their solution? . . . If we must play, let it be with things of less consequence than the Word of the eternal God.

"Consider whether the motive that stimulates you to such a manner of treating the Word of God be any other than *vanity*. If you preached to a people possessed of anything like good sense, they would consider it as perverting the Word of God, and whipping it into froth. Instead of applauding you, they would be unable to endure it. But if your people be ignorant, such things will please them; and they may gaze, and admire, and smile, and say one to another, it may be in your hearing, too, 'Well, what a man! Who would have thought that he would have found so much

gospel in that text?' Ah, very true: who indeed? But what would the Apostle Paul say? 'Are ye not carnal?' Is it for a man of God to 'court a grin when he should woo a soul'? For shame! desist from such folly, or lay aside the Christian ministry. . . .

"It is an easy thing for a man of luxuriant imagination, unencumbered by judgment, to make anything he pleases of the Scriptures, as well as any other book; but in so doing he destroys their simplicity, and, of course, their efficacy . . . Thus it is that characters abound who are full of scripture language, while yet they are awfully destitute of scripture knowledge or scriptural religion."

Preaching with such earnestness of purpose, and with such a just conception of what preaching ought to be, it is easy for us to understand that few sermons excelled his in their sound teaching and practical tendency.

He excels as an expositor almost more than as a preacher. His pages, of course, do not bristle with the names of authors consulted, as do those of commentators who seem to think it desirable to let their readers know how much they have read, and, for this purpose, not only introduce the authorities with which they agree, but those also from which they differ. Nor do they present the air of learning for which some are so distinguished—his early training did not admit of that. But for a masculine grip of his subject, for a clear insight into its meaning, for the power of bringing out its prominent features, and presenting them in language forcible and concise, he will bear comparison with any whom we know. His lectures on the Book of Genesis are admirable specimens of expository discourse, fitted at once to interest and instruct an audience; and would of themselves suffice to give him a high place among the masters of pulpit discourse. Take the

following from his exposition of Genesis xiv. 1-3:—"The close of Judah's speech must have been succeeded by a solemn pause. Every heart is full; but every tongue is silent. The audience, if they understood the language, would be all in tears. The ten brethren, viewing the whole as the righteous judgment of God upon them, would be full of fearful amazement as to the issue. Benjamin would feel both for his dear father and his beloved brother, who had offered to give himself for him! But what saith the judge? How does he stand affected? I have no doubt but that he must have covered his face during the greater part of the time in which Judah had been pleading; and now this will not suffice. The fire burns within him, and it must have vent. 'Cause every man,' said he, 'to depart from me.' And then he breaks out in a loud weeping, so that the Egyptians from without heard him. Their minds, no doubt, must be filled with amazement and desire to know the cause of this strange affair; while the parties within would be still more confounded to witness such a burst of sorrow from him who, but a while before, was all sternness and severity. But now the mystery is at once revealed, and that in a few words—'I AM JOSEPH!!! DOTH MY FATHER YET LIVE?' If they had been struck by an electric shock, or the most tremendous peal of thunder had instantly been heard over their heads, its effect had been nothing in comparison of that which these words must have produced. They are all struck dumb, and, as it were, petrified with terror. If he had been actually dead, and had risen and appeared to them, they could not have felt greatly different. The flood of thoughts which would at once rush in upon their minds is past description. No words could better express the general effect than those which are used: 'They could not answer him, for they were troubled at his presence.'" Vers. 4-8:—"A little

mind amidst all its sympathy might have enjoyed the triumph which Joseph now had over those who once hated him, and have been willing to make them feel it; but he has made them feel sufficiently already, and, having forgiven them in his heart, he remembers their sin no more, but is full of tender solicitude to heal their wounded spirits. 'Come near unto me,' saith he, 'I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.' This painful event he does not seem to have mentioned but for the sake of convincing them that it was he himself, even their brother Joseph, and not another; and lest the mention of it should he taken as a reflection, and so add to their distress, he immediately follows it up with a dissuasion from overmuch sorrow. 'Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years, in the which there shall be neither earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you, to preserve a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God; and He hath made me a father to Pharaoh,' etc.

"In this soothing and tender strain did this excellent man pour balm into their wounded hearts. A less delicate mind would have talked of forgiving them; but he entreats them to forgive themselves, as though the other was out of the question. Nor did he mean that they should abuse the doctrine of Providence to the making light of sin; but merely that they should eye the hand of God in all, so as to be reconciled to the event, though they might weep in secret for the part which they had acted. And it is his desire that they should, for the present, at least, view the subject much in that point of light which would arm them against despondency.

and a being swallowed up of overmuch sorrow. Their viewing things in this light would not abate their godly sorrow, but rather increase it; it would tend only to expel the sorrow of the world which worketh death. The analogy between all this, and the case of a sinner on Christ first manifesting Himself to his soul, is very striking. I cannot enlarge on particulars: suffice it to say, the more he views the doctrine of the cross, in which God hath glorified Himself, and saved a lost world by those very means which were intended for evil by His murderers, the better it will be with him. He shall not be able to think sin on this account a less, but a greater, evil; and yet he shall be so armed against despondency, as even to rejoice in what God hath wrought, while he trembles in thinking of the evils from which he has escaped."

The revolution which took place in his doctrinal views, as expressed in his "Gospel worthy of all Acceptation," found practical embodiment in his work in connection with the formation and conducting of the Baptist Missionary Society. The one was the natural consequence and corollary of the other. If, as he said, "the origin of the Society was found in the workings of Brother Carey's mind," it is certain that these workings were greatly helped and stimulated by the broad and enlightened teaching of Mr. Fuller. A sermon of his preached at Nottingham, before the Northampton Association of Baptist Churches, contained the following significant utterances, expressive of leanings and convictions such as find their natural embodiment in missions to the heathen; and show that, though William Carey was the first to form the conception of originating such a mission, he was likely to find in Mr. Fuller a sympathetic coadjutor:—"This may encourage and direct us in large concerns which respect the

whole interest of Christ in the world. If we compare the present state of things, or even the past, with the glorious prophecies of the Word of God, we cannot think, surely, that all is yet accomplished. By these prophecies the Christian church is encouraged to look for great things at some period or other of her existence. She is taught to look for a time when 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas;' when 'a nation shall be born at once;' when 'the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ;' and 'He shall reign from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.' But surely, for the present, though great things on the whole have been done in the world, yet nothing like this has ever come to pass. Instead of the world being conquered, what a great part yet continues to stand out against him! Heathenism, Mahommedanism, popery, and infidelity, how extensive still their influence! In all probability not a single country, town, village, or congregation, has ever yet been brought wholly to submit to Christ! Nay, is it not very rare to find, in any one of these, so many real friends as to make even a majority in His favour? May not the Christian church, then, for the present, adopt that language, 'We have been with child, we have, as it were, brought forth wind, we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen'? What, then, shall we despair? God forbid! 'The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it shall surely come, it will not tarry;' and, meanwhile, 'the just shall live by faith.'

"Let us take encouragement, in the present day of small things, by looking forward, and hoping for better days. Let this be attended with earnest and united prayer to Him by

whom Jacob must arise. A life of faith will ever be a life of prayer. Oh, brethren! let us pray much for an outpouring of God's Spirit on our ministers and churches; and not upon those only of our own connection and denomination, but upon 'all that in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours.'"

Entries in his journal breathe a similar spirit and sentiment, and show how his mind is being gradually led up to the great work which he afterwards undertook. "Felt some tenderness of heart several times in the day, longing for the coming of Christ's kingdom, and the salvation of my hearers."

"Read part of a poem by John Scott, Esq., on the cruelties of the English in the East Indies, causing artificial famines, etc. My heart felt most earnest desires that Christ's kingdom might come, when all these cruelties shall cease. Oh for the time when neither the sceptre of oppression nor heathen superstition shall bear the sway over them! Lord Jesus, set up Thy glorious and peaceful kingdom all over the world! Found earnest desire this morning in prayer, that God would hear the right as to them, and hear our prayers, in which the churches agree to unite, for the spread of Christ's kingdom."

"Spent this day in fasting and prayer, in conjunction with several of my brethren in the ministry, for the revival of our churches and the spread of the gospel. Found some tenderness and earnestness in prayer several times in the day. Wrote a few thoughts on the desirableness of the coming of Christ's kingdom."

These sentences were spoken or written some eight years before the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society. But they sufficiently indicate the bent of Mr. Fuller's mind, and his preparedness to take part in such a work, although he

was not so ready as his friend Carey to recognise the practicability of the enterprise in the then state of the churches. They breathe a spirit, however, in perfect harmony with missionary work, and prepare us for finding him identified with the Society from its commencement.

The particulars connected with that event will be entered into more fully in our next sketch; and it may suffice to say, meanwhile, that it was in the scene of Mr. Fuller's ministry at Kettering that the Society was originated in 1792, when the famous amount of £13 2*s.* 6*d.* was collected for the great object; that Mr. Fuller was its first secretary, and continued to hold that office and perform its duties gratuitously up to the day of his death, which was no doubt hastened by his excessive, arduous, and self-denying labours in the cause.

How well he performed the duties of secretary,—with what devotedness and wisdom combined, now corresponding with the missionaries in a truly fraternal, and sometimes semi-paternal spirit, counselling them in their perplexities, and cheering them under their discouragements; now collecting money for them among the churches, and for this purpose making long journeys, sometimes in the dead of winter, at a time when travelling was not what it is now; now defending them against their adversaries both at home and abroad; in all these things nobly "holding the rope" for those who had "gone down into the pit," and serving the great cause, scarcely, if at all, less efficiently than they,—is it not all written in his own journals, and in the history of the Baptist Missionary Society?

There is one part of his work to which we cannot make more than the briefest reference. His "Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Pearce of Birmingham," with whom he was lovingly associated in work for the mission, is considered an admirable

specimen of biographical writing, and indicates qualities of quite another kind from those which found scope in his theological and controversial works. Excellence in so many departments of effort, it need scarcely be said, betokens a very general ability, and all-roundedness, as it may be called, which stamps him as no ordinary man, but one on whom God has manifestly set His mark as one of the truly great, fitted both by nature and grace for rendering extraordinary service to the cause of truth and righteousness.

We have said nothing of his domestic life, nor is there much to be said beyond this, that in his family relations he was very much tried, especially by the early death of his first wife, which was preceded by mental derangement that was still more painful, and by the misconduct of a son over whom he pours out lamentations as pathetic as those of David over the untimely death of Absalom. We refrain, however, from entering further into the details of his trials, because these do not in any way constitute the distinctive features of his life. Others have been tried as severely as he; and it is not with what his history presents in common with others, but with that which distinguished him from others, that our purpose requires us to deal. It may suffice to say that his severest trials were borne with the most exemplary patience and implicit submission to the Divine will, showing how much the consolations of the gospel which he so successfully ministered to others were realised in his own experience. With nothing are we more impressed, after the perusal of his history, than the amount of work which, in his circumstances, he was able to accomplish. Notwithstanding all that devolved on him as the secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, and its deputation as well, he continued pastor of the church at Kettering up to the time of his

death, and performed his pastoral duties in such an efficient and acceptable manner that his name is fragrant in the neighbourhood up to this day, and will continue to be so for many years to come; and yet was able to produce those published works, which for their voluminousness and excellence would seem to have been almost sufficient to fully occupy his time for many years of his life. Like others with whom he was associated, especially in the mission, as we shall see in our next sketch, he appears to have been no less diligent than he was able; and may fairly be held up to the young men in our churches as a noble example of how much may be accomplished by a man who realises the solemnity of life, and acts as under his Master's eye. And we scarcely know whether it be the greater advantage to have a spiritual ancestry distinguished by great gifts, rather than by the devoted spirit which turns those great gifts to good account in the service of God and man. The latter is perhaps the greater advantage of the two, because, though all cannot become possessed of their gifts, all may breathe their spirit. And where the two are combined, as in the case of Fuller and others, they ought to exert a most bracing and salutary influence on all who have the honour to be denominationally connected with them, and whose ambition it ought to be fitly to represent them, and to act a part which shall not be unworthy of their renown. We prove ourselves craven sons of noble sires—mean followers of noble men, if we do not emulate the deeds of our fathers, and prove, so far as we can, that we, too, belong to the race of giants, and that some of their blood flows in our veins. May God make our mental contact with them the means of promoting in us some of the mental and moral qualities by which they were so eminently distinguished.

We have already hinted our belief that his labours short-

ened his life, and there can be no doubt that this was the case. A few months before his death he took a journey into Lancashire and the North of England on behalf of the Mission; and in his last illness was planning other journeys for the same object, although doubting his ability to undertake them; "but perhaps I may prove like Samson, who went out to do as at other times, and wist not that his strength was departed from him." Even when his illness was upon him, his work at home was scarcely less trying than if he had been journeying from place to place. "Within three or four months of his decease, while labouring under the most depressed state of body and mind, occasioned by a disordered liver, he sat at his desk upwards of twelve hours a day!" On parting with his friends at Leicester, on the journey we have referred to, "he intimated to them that he was very ill—that he should probably see them no more, that his work was nearly done, but that he could not spare time to nurse himself, and must labour on as best he could."

He died when he was but sixty-one years of age. We cannot say prematurely; for though he had not reached the allotted threescore years and ten, there were crowded into his brief life more works that were fitted to prove a source of lasting good to men, and of glory to God, than are found even in many useful lives which are much more prolonged. He himself, if we may judge from some of his recorded conversations, did not regret that he was not to live longer. He regarded life more as a season for work than for enjoyment; and when he began to feel incapacitated for work, we do not fancy that life had any very great attractions for him. Then, the record which his life presented—even although he took the most humble view of it, and died not glorying in what he had done, but, to use his own words, "as a penitent sinner at the foot of the cross—" must have

contributed to the contentment with which he was prepared to go. He could not help feeling that he had not lived in vain; and we can well understand that, with his wearied body and depressed nervous condition, the prospect of rest and reward may have been more attractive to him than the prospect of continued labour. And if such were his feelings, we cannot but think he was right. Measured by its results, he had enjoyed enough of life to satisfy his most ardent desires and sanguine expectations. For

> "We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
> In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
> We should count time by heart-throbs.
> He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest,
> Acts the best."

WILLIAM CAREY,

The Linguist.

"IN routing out a nest of consecrated cobblers, and in bringing to light such a perilous heap of trash as we were obliged to work through in our article on the Methodists and Missionaries, we are generally conceived to have rendered a useful service to the cause of rational religion."

So wrote a clergyman of the Church of England in an old number of the *Edinburgh Review*. In the article which rendered "useful service to the cause of rational religion," he had declared the objects of his dislike to be "utterly unfit for their work"—"visionary enthusiasts"—"calculated to bring ridicule and disgrace on the gospel"—"pernicious and extravagant in their own country, and benefiting us much more by their absence than the Hindoos by their advice." In the article just quoted from, in which he refers with so much pride to his work, he launches out into still more scurrilous abuse. They are "delirious mechanics"—their friends are "the nasty and numerous vermin of Methodism"—"wriggling animals, whose drunken declamations and wriggling lubricity it is scarcely possible to reduce to a point."

In such choice phraseology does this reverend reviewer speak of men with whom he had no personal quarrel, and whom he hates for no reason that we can see unless it be their superior goodness. It is not necessary to vindicate the character of the men thus assailed from these foul-mouthed aspersions. History has already pronounced its verdict both on them and their assailant. The nicknames which, like a resident of Billingsgate, he bandies about so freely, are more discreditable to him than to them. Before his death he received such a handling from one of their friends as he would not be likely to forget till his dying day. John Foster, the friend of Carey, took up the cudgels on their behalf, and in his hands the reverend reviewer was made to appear singularly small. Before their deaths the men whom he assailed received the most marked attentions from the government of India; and in little more than a year after his onslaught, a writer in the *Quarterly Review*, not likely to be over-partial to the missionaries, wrote thus: —"These low-born and low-bred mechanics have translated the whole Bible into Bengalee, and have by this time printed it. They are printing the New Testament in the Sanscrit, the Orissa, Mahratta, Hindostanee, and Guzerat, and translating it into Persian, Felinga, Kamata, Chinese, the languages of the Sikhs, and of the Burmans; and in four of these languages they are going on with the Bible. Extraordinary as this is, it will appear more so when it is remembered that of these men one was originally a shoemaker, another a printer at Hull, and a third the master of a charity school at Bristol. Only fourteen years have elapsed since Thomas and Carey set foot in India, and in that time have these missionaries acquired this gift of tongues; in fourteen years these low-born and low-bred mechanics have done more towards spreading the knowledge of the Scriptures among

the heathen than has been done or even attempted by all the world besides."

But while such men require no vindication, their lives may supply a very salutary and much-needed stimulus; and it will not be out of place if we rehearse the story of one with the facts of whose life our readers ought all to be familiar.

William Carey was a man of humble birth—"low-born and low-bred," as the *Quarterly Review* puts it; a man of no family, as others would say, and therefore a man to be lightly esteemed by those who, as if they had drawn theirs from a special fountain, as well as through particular channels which are not always very pure, think blood everything. The circumstances of his parents were mean. "His grandfather and father were successively the parish clerk and schoolmaster" of the village of Pury, or Paulerspury, in Northamptonshire, where he was born on the 17th August, 1761.

Without any special advantages of birth, therefore, William Carey, for whatever position he took in the world, was indebted to what God made him in the first instance, and to what, through Divine grace and his own efforts, he afterwards became. And happily this is becoming more and more the only ground on which any position can be taken. Every day hastens the advent of the time in which the question will be, not, whence has a man sprung? but, what is he as God created him, and as he has subsequently, through education and toil, become? Not, who? but, what? And when men who claim position must be prepared to say, "Here we are," or "There we claim to be by right of a Divine creation. God has set His stamp upon us as mayhap He did upon your fathers—a stamp by which they claimed their superior position if they had a right to it at all—a stamp

which He has not placed on many of their shrunken and shrivelled sons, and which ye, lacking, have forfeited all claim to your lofty place, and had better make way for its being filled by worthier men. Family, blood, descent, forsooth! Have not we all sprung from Adam? If your fathers were such an improvement on the original stock, it may be that we have improved also; and that you have deteriorated. For where improvement is possible, degeneracy is also possible. Your fathers ennobled themselves once,—it may be our turn to prove our nobility now. On the ground of our manhood we take our stand, and we challenge you to present a higher claim."

Carey's position in life was at first still more humble, if possible, than that of his parents. Dr. Ryland recorded in his diary: "To-day baptized in the river a poor journeyman shoemaker." He afterwards became pastor of a Baptist Church, first at Barton, then at Moulton, and subsequently at Leicester; and in all three places laboured as hard in the ministry of the Word as if it had been his sole occupation. His ministerial position, however, was no indication of worldly status. It implied no University training, no episcopal ordination, no sacerdotal dignity,—nothing beyond certain mental and spiritual endowments which enabled him to minister profitably to a few believing souls, and to proclaim in simple and unpretending manner to his humble congregation the gospel of Christ. The last, and the least poor, of the churches which he served, could not raise funds enough to provide him and his family with the means of subsistence; and from the others he received almost nothing. He was by trade a shoemaker, and sometimes in that capacity, and at others as a schoolmaster, for which he had qualified himself by private study, he earned his daily bread. He was thus literally and emphatically one of the sons of toil—a

fact for which I need not say we do not despise him any more than for his humble birth; but rather honour him all the more because from his humble position he, by dint of his own personal exertions, rose to the honourable place which he afterwards filled.

We should be glad if we could say that Carey was a good shoemaker. It is generally thought that great men do everything well which they attempt. The story of the town drummer who became chief magistrate, and when taunted by a lazy underling whom he rebuked for his idleness with his former occupation, replied, "Didn't I drum well?" has often been told, and generally received with great approval. And possibly it is so far true that a truly great man will do whatever work he has to do honestly and as well as he can. Still it is conceivable that such a man may have to do a work for which he is little qualified, and in which he can never excel. He may have more power of brain than of hand, and excel more in thought than manipulation. Be this as it may, it is a fact that Carey attained to no eminence either as shoemaker or schoolmaster. In the latter capacity he seems to have been something like wax in the hands of his pupils. He did not keep the school so much as the school kept him. In the former his utmost efforts were barely sufficient for the supply of his daily wants. At one time he was almost at starvation-point; and more than thirty years afterwards, when he was in the company of the Governor-General of India, and heard an officer enquiring if he had not been a shoemaker at one time, he stepped up and said, "No, not a shoemaker, only a cobbler." Thus one part at least of Sydney Smith's designation was applicable. He had been a cobbler whether "consecrated" or not; and his life proves that this epithet was equally well applied.

But "cobbler" or not, the man was endowed with glorious capacities for work of another kind—capacities which found before long, as they generally will find, a suitable sphere for exercise. A tendency to abstract thought may be traced perhaps in his mentally working out arithmetical problems when he was only six years of age. His enquiring turn of mind was shown in his avidity for books, and his attention to minute objects in natural history, such as plants and insects; his indomitable perseverance, in the fact that as a child he completed whatever he had commenced, never suffering himself to be baffled by difficulties. These qualities, after he was apprenticed at fourteen to his uncongenial trade, manifested themselves in the eagerness with which he seized every opportunity of adding to his stores of knowledge. A commentary on the New Testament, with some Greek words in it, which he found among the shoemaker's small store of books, led to his learning the Greek language under the direction of a weaver in the village, who had been educated for the medical profession, and whose early studies qualified him for giving help to the young student. Doubtless he proved an apt scholar, and required but little drilling; for at a very early age his faculty for acquiring languages began to manifest itself. He had a passion, in fact, for such studies. His appetite for them was insatiable, and rejected nothing that came in its way. While prosecuting his ministerial and other labours at Moulton, sore pressed in circumstances, a friend presented him with a large folio volume of Dutch sermons. To most people in his circumstances such a volume would have been useless. To him it was an incentive to new exertion. With a borrowed grammar and dictionary, he set himself to study, and soon became sufficiently acquainted with the language to present his friend with an English translation of one of the sermons.

These qualities admirably fitted him for the work to which his life was devoted, and it was through the idea of missions seizing him like a Divine inspiration and leading him to consecrate his life to that object that they were brought into profitable use. *Like* a Divine inspiration! And was it not so in reality? Whence but from the Author of all good could such a thought come? How, but for the working of that Divine Spirit, who enlighteneth whomsoever He pleaseth, could it have entered the mind of a humble shoemaker to attempt the then almost untried work of giving the gospel to the heathen? What but the inworking of a Divine power could have sustained him, amidst all the opposition his proposal met with from friend and foe, until—one obstacle after another vanquished—he realised the dream of his life, and became the pioneer and founder of modern missions? Let sceptics sneer as they will, we believe that if ever work was of God, and if ever man was led by the Divine hand and moved by the Divine breath to a great enterprise, that work was the sending of the gospel to the heathen, and that man was William Carey.

Not only was "the origin of the Baptist Missionary Society," as Mr. Fuller said, "found in the workings of Brother Carey's mind," but considering how that suggested and prepared the way for others, we venture to add the origin of modern Protestant missions "will be found in the workings of Brother Carey's mind." In nothing is the Providence of God more distinctly traceable than when it employs trifling circumstances to suggest thoughts to minds in which they fructify into glorious results. The reading of "Cook's Voyages round the World," and the teaching of geography to his pupils at Moulton, planted in Carey's mind the germ which afterwards developed into such goodly form and bore such precious fruit. After he returned to his

occupation as shoemaker, owing to the failure of his school, the thought continued to strengthen its hold upon him. On the wall of his workshop he had hung up a large map of his own drawing, composed of several sheets of paper, and containing a record of all the information bearing on the condition of the people which he had been able to glean concerning the several countries. To that map, as he bent over his last, his eyes were often raised; and while his hands were busy, his thoughts were far away, contemplating the sad condition of heathen tribes, and fostering his desire to supply them with the Word of Life.

The response he elicited, when he first mentioned his thoughts to others, was enough—had he not been a man of most resolute will—to make him bury them for ever in his own breast. In a meeting of ministers at Northampton he ventured to propose for consideration—"The duty of Christians to attempt the spread of the gospel among heathen nations." The senior minister, the venerable Mr. Ryland, who occupied the chair, seems to have thought the proposal not only bold, but next to blasphemous. Springing to his feet, and frowning, he met it with a stern rebuke—"Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine." He or another is said to have asked Carey derisively if he expected a second Pentecost. Even Andrew Fuller, though he was afterwards, up to the time of his death, the heart and soul of the mission in England, if he did not censure the proposal appears to have deemed it less practical than visionary, and felt like the unbelieving Israelite, who said of Elisha's prophecy, "If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be?"

Happily all his friends were not equally sceptical. A Mr. Potts, of Birmingham, to whom he mentioned the

matter, and made known his readiness to go to any heathen land, if any body of Christians would send him and support him for twelve months, was the first to encourage him. It was a bold offer, when one considers the circumstances under which it was made. So it appeared to Mr. Potts, who naturally replied that the scheme was altogether new, and the Christian public unprepared for such an enterprise. But when Carey mentioned that he had a pamphlet ready for the press, which, if he could find the means of publishing it, might excite some interest on the subject, he was cheered by and gladly accepted an offer of £10 towards the necessary expenses.

This may be said to have been the first gleam of encouragement he received from any human source. Up to this time he was entirely alone in entertaining the grand idea which has now entered so completely into our church life that we can hardly conceive of churches existing without it. No one sympathised with him sufficiently to entertain his scheme. Alone he brooded over his God-given thought—alone he cherished his God-inspired purpose, isolated in the grandeur of his conception from his dearest friends—alone against the world. It is a splendid illustration of the morally sublime. Galileo muttering, "But it moves—it moves," after ecclesiastical tyranny has forced him to retract his theory as to the earth's motion; of Columbus waiting on the courts of Europe for the means of giving a new and undiscovered world to the masters of the old; but neither of them excites our admiration more than the village pastor and shoemaker cherishing, in his deep poverty, his lofty faith and purpose, while in vain he solicits the countenance of his friends on an enterprise whose lofty aim it is to bring the heathen world to Christ.

How often in this way God employs insignificant and

apparently, though not really, unlikely instruments for the accomplishment of great results! He levels the walls of a city by the sounding of rams' horns; scatters and routs with an utter destruction a host of warriors that swarm through the land like locusts, with the light of a lantern and the crash of broken pitchers; lays lifeless in the dust the proudest and strongest of Philistine warriors, and sends panic into their army with a sling and a stone in a stripling's hands. With fishermen, and tent-makers, and Roman tax-gatherers, He promulgates a religion which conquers the world; employs a poor imprisoned tinker, who tags laces for the support of his family, to write, in the intervals of his humble occupation, a book which shall be read by every class throughout all succeeding generations, and guide the feet of ten thousand pilgrims on their way to glory. And when He would open the treasures of His Word to the teeming nations of the East, not any of England's learned men, not the members of her hierarchy, nor the professors in her universities, but a poor humble shoemaker, is the instrument employed. It is His plan thus to choose "the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and things which are despised, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are; that no flesh may glory in His presence."

It is not intended to convey the impression that there was anything supernatural in Carey's achievements, or that he was *really* unqualified for what he did. On the contrary, beneath the superficial unfitness any one may discern a strength of faith and purpose which are the earnests of success. These are the qualities by which throughout all ages the greatest things have been achieved. Men of faith and purpose move the world. With a true idea they are invincible. In spite of all hindrances, they cause their voice

to be heard and their influence felt, until the world, which at first opposed, swings round to their standpoint, and the cause for which they pleaded, and for which, it may be, they suffered and died, becomes triumphant. To believe something and to aim at something is the secret of moral power. The belief, of course, may be false, the aim unworthy, and the result in consequence of no benefit to mankind; but withal the man is stronger for their possession than if he had a creedless mind and a wavering will. Without belief or aim a human being deserves not to be called a man. He is a mere piece of pliable material—ductile clay in the potter's hands—the creature of circumstances and their slave; whereas, before the man of faith and purpose all difficulties vanish. The true idea having entered the mind, faith is cherished in its practicability, and its certain or probable results; the resolution is formed to translate the idea into fact; and then ultimately all becomes plain. Obstacles are vanquished one by one. The man cleaves his way resistlessly through breastworks of opposition. Other men, who at first objected, yield to the current of his inflexible will, and the dreamer's fancy, at which the world laughed, becomes the accomplished fact by which the world profits to the end of time.

Carey's pamphlet did not appear for some time, although his friends Fuller, Sutcliff, and Dr. Ryland, to whom he mentioned Mr. Potts's offer, while unwilling to do anything themselves to rouse the denomination to an interest in missions, advised him, chiefly to escape from his importunity, to revise and publish. His private representations and pleadings, however, were gradually producing an altered tone of feeling in the circle of his ministerial friends, insomuch that at the Easter meeting of ministers held at Clifton, in 1791, the missionary aspect of the sermons en-

couraged him to urge the immediate formation of a society for the propagation of the gospel in heathen lands. But however favourably disposed to it, they were too timid as yet, had too little faith in their resources to venture on such a decided step, and thereby commit themselves to an unexampled enterprise. All that they did was, with a view of gaining time and sparing his feelings, to renew the recommendation to publish which some of them had previously given. As nothing more could be gained then, he consented. Under these circumstances his *Enquiry on Missions* appeared; and, humble pamphlet though it was, it became the spring of an enterprise which now extends its operations to every part of the world. It was a handful of corn on the top of the mountains, the fruit whereof now shakes like Lebanon. It diffused throughout the members of his denomination the feeling in favour of missions which his private representations had first awakened in a few, and led them gradually to recognise the grandeur of the work of which he was the earnest and persistent advocate.

In the year following, the annual meeting of the Association of Baptist Churches with which he was connected was held at Nottingham. Carey preached before the assembled brethren from the text, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." The divisions of his sermon, which were singularly felicitous—their simplicity, conciseness, exhaustiveness, and force, indicating the genius of the preacher, have since become watchwords in the Baptist denomination, and are often quoted in its gatherings as incentives to faith and enterprise in the service of Christ. 1. *Expect great*

things from God. 2. *Attempt great things for God.* The sermon was a free outpouring of the pent-up feeling of years, eloquent in its earnestness. The audience, deeply moved as he denounced the indifference of the church to the state of the heathen world, seemed to Dr. Ryland as if they were ready to weep aloud. The feeling, however, had all but subsided without any practical result until Mr. Carey, seeing the ministers about to separate without coming to any decision, seized Mr. Fuller's hand, and in a tone of anguish asked whether they were again going away while nothing was done. This outburst of feeling appears to have been more effectual than the sermon. Mr. Fuller seems at once to have resolved on some practical step, for before they separated a resolution was passed—"That a plan be prepared against the next ministers' meeting at Kettering for the establishment of a society for the propagation of the gospel among the heathen." This meeting was held on the 2nd of October, 1792, and after the services of the day the society was formed. It was not without hesitation and fear, as one may suppose, that the twelve Baptist ministers who then met committed themselves to the new undertaking. They were few in number. Their influence was not great, and their resources were very limited. The institution was without precedent from which they could gather hints for their guidance in the conduct of its affairs. Their provincial and inland position was not in their favour. And, worst of all, they knew of no heathen land in which they were likely to find a favourable opening. In the face of these obstacles, however, Carey's earnestness prevailed. The ministers there and then vowed to one another and to God that they would at least *attempt* to send the gospel to some heathen land. Five of their number—Andrew Fuller, John Ryland, John Sutcliff, Reynold Hogg, and William Carey—were appointed

a committee, Mr. Hogg treasurer, and Mr. Fuller secretary. A subscription was taken, which amounted to thirteen pounds two shillings and sixpence; and, on the faith of this, Carey was ready to start for any country to which they might send him.

The men of the world may sneer at this scene, finding occasion for wit in the disparity between the magnitude of the object and the insignificance of the means. There may be as little in the nature of the enterprise to excite their sympathy as in the circumstances of its origin to command their respect. In their estimation the object and the authors may be alike fit subjects for ridicule. The language of Sidney Smith—"consecrated cobblers"—or that of Mr. Marsh in the House of Commons—"tub preachers"—"renegades from the lowest handicraft employments"—"apostates from the loom and the anvil, crawling from the holes and caverns of their original destinations"—"maimed and crippled gladiators"—may be thought to supply the most appropriate designations for heroes of their type. But we are bold to say that to all who are gifted with spiritual discernment there are few finer spectacles of true moral sublimity than that of William Carey offering to start, on the faith of so small a sum, as the bearer of Christ's gospel to any part of the known or unknown world. For, be it remembered, there is nothing sublime in the employment of great means for small results, but in that faith in God and truth which with smallest means attempts the mightiest ends.

With such agents as Carey, and collections like those at Kettering to support them, Indian missions, says the biographer of Dr. Chalmers, "appeared a fit quarry for that shaft which none knew better than our *Edinburgh Reviewer* how to use; and yet, looking somewhat more narrowly at

the consecrated cobbler, there was something about him even at the beginning sufficient to disarm ridicule; for if we notice him in his little garden, he will be seen motionless for an hour or more in the attitude of intense thought; or if we join him in his evening hours, we shall find him reading the Bible in one or other of four different languages with which he has already made himself familiar; or if we follow him into his school we shall find him with a large leather globe of his own construction, pointing out to the village urchins the different kingdoms of the earth, saying, 'These are Christians—these are Mahommedans—these are Pagans, these are Pagans,' his voice stopped by strong emotion as he repeats and repeats the last mournful utterance."

He who could find anything in this to excite his ridicule is neither to be admired nor envied. My soul does homage to the man who, all heedless of the inadequate means, moves with such fearlessness and such singleness of purpose to the magnificent end on which he has set his heart. It is not easy to find a better spiritual tonic to correct our self-indulgent tendencies than his memory supplies, although we must feel, as Wilberforce said when defending him and his brother missionaries against the attack of Mr. Marsh, that "we can only admire that eminence of merit which we despair to reach, and bow before such exalted virtue."

After the Society had been formed, and moneys were received sufficient to admit of his going forth on his mission —the Birmingham auxiliary sending £70, and other places contributing in similar manner—his difficulties were only begun. There was no heathen land which could be said to present a favourable opening. Naturally, the most inviting field was that portion of India which had come under British

rule; and their decision in its favour was ultimately fixed by a letter from a Mr. John Thomas, who had been resident in Bengal for some years, and preached the gospel among the natives. This letter led to an interview with the Society, after which Mr. Thomas was accepted as Carey's colleague; and the place of their destination was the district of Malda, where Thomas had formerly laboured.

Very formidable difficulties had to be overcome before that destination was reached. Carey's wife, having no sympathy with his purpose, refused to accompany him. But he was not a man to be debarred from the path of duty, even by the strongest family ties. If his wife would not go, she must be left behind. His eldest son he would take with him, and after the mission was established, when probably her objections would be overcome, he would return for her and the other children. Outside, still more formidable difficulties confronted them, and the manner in which they were vanquished illustrated the old proverb, "Where there's a will there's a way." The East India Company, so long as it was only a commercial body, had shown no dislike to missions; but after it became a sovereign power, it dreaded their influence on the stability of its rule. Lest they should lead to revolt among the native population, it resolved to check all attempt to interfere with their religious views. In 1783 the English Parliament passed an Act empowering the Court of Directors to prevent any Englishman residing in India without their licence. They had thus the power as well as the disposition to close India against all missionary enterprise. At the time Carey and Thomas wished to embark, recent agitations had made them more than usually resolved on such a course. There was no likelihood that the necessary licence could be obtained, so that India seemed completely barred against Carey and his friend. They must go without licence, at the

risk of being sent home as soon as they landed, or not go at all. Fortunately, as it seemed, there was a captain of one of the Company's vessels with whom Mr. Thomas had made two voyages as surgeon, who was prepared to take them without leave. With him they took passage, and embarked off the Isle of Wight, hoping that, as God had opened their way so far, He might bring them safely to their destination among the people whom they sought to reach.

These hopes, however, were doomed for a short time to bitter disappointment. Before they sailed, the captain received a letter, telling him that information was about to be laid against him at the India House for taking out passengers without the permission and contrary to the express orders of the Company. Alarmed at the probable consequences, he insisted on their returning on shore; and with heavy hearts they were obliged to disembark at Ryde. "We are all undone," wrote Mr. Fuller to a friend, although he afterwards assumed a more hopeful tone, and admitted that it might be for the best.

In one respect it was for the best. As the Company's ships were required to report their passengers on arrival in India, it is almost certain that the missionaries would not have been permitted to land, but immediately shipped back to England. Still, the disappointment was trying to faith, especially as their scanty funds were diminished by the loss of part of their passage money, and as it was not easy to find another vessel in which they could proceed. With tears Carey saw the Indian fleet set sail, leaving them behind; but remained at Portsmouth in hope that God would open the way for their departure.

After long and fruitless search, they heard of a Danish ship proceeding to Calcutta, and means were immediately adopted to raise the necessary funds for their passage.

Mrs. Carey, meanwhile, had consented to accompany her husband; but insisted on taking her sister also. With the women and children thus added to their number, the sum required for passage money amounted to £600, while, with all their efforts, they could not raise more than £300. Through Mr. Thomas's negotiations and the generosity of the agent, this difficulty was eventually overcome, and the whole party embarked in the *Cron Princessa Maria* on the 13th of June, 1793, and arrived at Calcutta on the 11th of November of the same year. Being in a foreign vessel their arrival was not reported, and as their presence attracted no notice, they were permitted to land without molestation.

It was not much to our credit that the heroic men who were thus conveying to India God's best gift to mankind could only gain admission to the country under the shelter of a foreign flag. No very creditable fact that for Christian England! Happily she has now had her eyes opened to the evil effects of such short-sighted policy. A passage in one of the Indian Blue Books furnishes a strange commentary on the facts we have noticed—"The Government of India cannot but acknowledge the great obligations under which it is laid by the benevolent exertions of the six hundred missionaries, whose blameless example and self-denying exertions are infusing new vigour into the stereotyped life of the great populations placed under English rule, preparing them to be in every way better men and better citizens of the great Empire in which they dwell." As we read that testimony, which no one can impugn, we are led to exclaim—"Oh, William Carey! thou hast had a noble revenge for all the opposition and the calumnies amidst which thou hadst to pursue thy heroic way."

The study of Benga'ee, which occupied a great part of

Carey's time on the voyage, was, on his arrival in India, continued to greater advantage under the direction of a former enquirer of Mr. Thomas's, whom he engaged as mounshee or interpreter. His studies, however, were not allowed to monopolise his time; but very soon after his landing he was practically engaged in the work on which his heart had so long been set, visiting the places of public resort in Calcutta, and explaining the gospel to the people. Under the most trying circumstances these labours were conducted. His companion, never discreet in money matters—though a most zealous missionary—soon exhausted the little property they had brought with them from England, leaving them literally destitute; so that, had it not been for the kindness of a native gentleman, Carey and his family must have starved. "I am in a strange land," he wrote at the time, "with no Christian friend, a large family, and nothing to supply their wants." Mrs. Carey, fretful under their privations, upbraided him with having brought them there to starve; and "frequently after walking ten or twelve miles through the town in prosecution of his great work, he would return to his wretched hovel to encounter the invectives of his wife and her sister."

Driven to distraction by these accumulated troubles, he resolved to borrow money and remove to the Soonderbuns. There, where land could be obtained from the government rent free, he could build huts for himself and his family, and subsist on the produce of the soil. When the necessary amount was raised they set out on their journey. Travelling in a boat by a circuitous route, their provisions were nearly exhausted. At this juncture Carey saw a European walking on the bank of the river near his bungalow, to whom he walked up with his whole family, and explained his position.

The gentleman was not a Christian—thought his mission a wild and impracticable scheme—but with princely hospitality invited him to make his house their home for six months or more, as circumstances might require.

Shortly after, he proceeded to erect his huts on the opposite side of the river, on a tract of land cleared of the jungle. Even in this gloomy position he is full of hope, concerned only about so much time being necessarily abstracted from his great work. "Wild hogs," he writes, "and deer and fowl can be procured by the gun, and must supply us with a considerable part of our food. I find an inconvenience in having so much of my time taken up in procuring provisions, and cultivating my little farm But when my house is built, I shall have more leisure than at present, and have daily opportunity of conversing with the natives, and pursuing the work of the mission."

Happily for the mission, he did not remain long in this unfavourable and unhealthy region. By a friend of Mr. Thomas he was appointed superintendent of an indigo factory at Malda, their original destination. There he preached on Sundays to the *employés* of the establishment, itinerated during the week among the surrounding villages, and, at the same time, found considerable leisure for his favourite studies; while by a rigid economy he was enabled to devote a fourth or a third of his income to missionary objects. His position admitted of that close intercourse with the natives which he deemed essential to the missionary; and thus for five years he laboured, being all the while providentially undergoing a course of preparation for the more important engagements which awaited him. The locality, however, was unhealthy. Fever at one time threatened his life. Two of his children were carried off

by dysentery, which so affected his wife that she lost her reason, and required to be placed under restraint till the time of her death.

Through his representations other missionaries were sent from England, whose history requires no further notice here, with the exception of Mr. Ward and Mr. Marshman, who landed in India in 1799, and proceeded to Serampore, which, being under the Danish government, offered a field for the prosecution of their work free from the hostile interference of British authorities. There, after some correspondence, Carey consented to join them, instead of their settling in his vicinity, and there, like true yoke-fellows, they laboured together harmoniously until God called them to their rest.

Their procedure reminds one of the early and palmy days of the New Testament Church, but is too romantic to commend itself to the wiser and more practical men of the present generation. The economical and self-sacrificing principles on which their work was done, whether wisely or unwisely, seem strange even to the reader of modern missionary reports. "The different mission families were formed into one. It was determined to form a common stock, to dine at a common table, and to give each family a trifling allowance for personal expenses. . . . No one was to engage in any private trade, and whatever might be earned was to be credited to the common stock." For years this principle was carried out so rigidly that when Mr. Marshman's boarding school was "yielding a yearly income of nearly a thousand pounds, he took no larger sum for the personal expenses of his family than £34 a year. The same spirit of disinterestedness animated both his colleagues. The corresponding allowance of Mr. and Mrs. Ward from the proceeds of the press, which

he conducted, was only £20 a year; and Mr. Carey, who was then tutor in the College of Fort William, out of his collegiate income of £600 a year had no larger sum than £40 annually for himself, his wife, and family, with a small addition of £20 to enable him to appear in what they termed 'decent apparel' at the College and at Government House." In this way they not only laboured for the Mission, as few men ever laboured who have been freed from all anxiety about their own support, and exempt from the necessity of earning their daily bread through the contributions of friends at home, but devoted their surplus earnings, which in the course of a few years amounted to several thousand pounds, to the great work to which they had consecrated their lives. In a letter reviewing their circumstances, five years after this arrangement was made, they state: "We want no one earthly comfort: in this respect we have all things, and abound We did not come to this country to be placed in what are called 'easy' circumstances respecting this world; and we trust that nothing but the salvation of souls will satisfy us. True, before we set off, we thought we could die content if we should be permitted to see the half of what we have already seen; yet now we seem almost as far from the mark of our missionary calling as ever. . . . The expenses attending the purchase and erection of large premises at Serampore, and beginning business at Cutwa, the translating and printing expenses, also, of these large, heavy works, and of free schools, added to the maintenance of so large a family,—all this God has provided for, with a comparatively small proportion of help from England. Our whole expenditure has not been less than £13,000, and we have received from England in money, goods, etc., not more than £5,740 17*s.* 7*d.* during the five years we have

been at Serampore; and this sum is not sunk, but invested in premises belonging to the mission. No private fortune, no annual contributions which you could have been expected to raise, could have borne the weight of expense which God has brought us through." What importance they attached to the arrangement which enabled them to contribute so much may be inferred from their correspondence with Mr. Fuller, who thought they carried their self-denial to excess, and against whose proposal of a change they earnestly protested, begging him if he would not wound their feelings not to mention the subject again. The spirit which animated them is well expressed in the words of one of their number (Mr. Ward), who says: "Finally let us give ourselves up unreservedly to this glorious cause. Let us never think that our time, our gifts, our strength, our families, or even the clothes we wear, are our own. Let us sanctify them all to God and His cause. Oh that He may sanctify us for this work! Let us for ever shut out the idea of laying up a cowrie for ourselves or our children. If we give up the resolution which was formed on the subject of private trade when we first united at Serampore, the mission is from that hour a lost cause. A worldly spirit quarrels, and every evil work will succeed the moment it is admitted that each brother may do something on his own account."

It has been said that their self-denying economy was a mistake. The only fact, however, advanced in support of that opinion is the discontent of the younger brethren who subsequently joined the mission, and the new arrangement which was made when the Society was reconstituted after the death of Mr. Fuller. The system, it is said, required a degree of devotion "not to be expected in the ordinary course of human affairs, and demanded a sacrifice of domestic convenience to which few could be induced to submit." The

latter statement is only too obvious to be questioned; but so far from the fact reflecting on the wisdom of the missionaries, it only reflects on the devotedness of all of us who do not come up to their standard. It is no argument against the excellence of any system to say that few men are disposed to adopt anything so good. And instead of dismissing it with implied censure on that account for something more in accordance with our inferior character, it should be held up as the standard to which we should all strive to conform. The younger brethren in this case who, on joining the mission, demurred to the existing arrangement, only proved their inferiority to their seniors in all that constitutes the true missionary spirit, and their inability to fill their place and to tread in their steps. It is not that those who did more were mistaken, but that we who do less are defective; and such, we may depend upon it, will be the verdict pronounced on us and them another day. How our self-complacency befriends us in these matters, and helps us to assume our superiority in point of enlightenment to the men whose devotion exceeds our own! The brother and biographer of Rev. W. C. Burns inserts in his memoir a letter from a missionary who maintains that Mr. Burns was mistaken in adopting the dress and accommodating himself to the manners of the Chinese. It was a needless mortification of the flesh, frustrating rather than furthering his great object. By similar statements, oftentimes the course of ordinary missionaries is made out to be preferable to the course of those extraordinary men, and the heroic acts of the latter shorn of half their value by being oracularly pronounced mistakes. How imprudent! what a mistake! is the cuckoo-cry by which men seek to damn in a respectable way everything that will not fit into their unheroic mould. A mistake it may have been in some respects for Carey and his colleagues to observe

such a self-denying *régime*,—but it was a glorious mistake, infinitely preferable to the proprieties of other men. A *mistake* against which, as few of us are likely to repeat it, we need not be very strongly cautioned. *A mistake* whose frequent repetition, moreover, would most effectually further the extension of the cause of Christ. *A mistake* which secured the future of their mission, enshrining it in the affections and admiration of the churches, as a thing which rose so manifestly above the low level of worldly prudence and calculation into the lofty sphere of sublime Christian heroism. *A mistake* whose very memory elicits for their cause the most generous support, investing it with a sacredness which commands the homage of its friends, stirring the heart of the Church, and rousing her to a holy emulation of their heroic deeds. *A mistake*, like that which brought Paul so often into hardships and perils, and ultimately into circumstances which led to his being sent a prisoner to Rome, where a martyr's doom awaited him, and a martyr's crown. *A mistake* which we devoutly pray may be often repeated, until the whole Church, with an energy, a zeal, and a devotedness commensurate with the grandeur of her enterprise, shall consecrate herself to the work of winning the world to Christ!

If we are not disposed to imitate them, let us not assume our superiority, nor presume to sit in judgment on men whose moral greatness we not only fail to imitate, but are scarcely able to measure; but rather let us bring their conduct and our own to the highest of all standards, and see which will best bear the test—whether they or we give the most fitting response to the claims of Christ, are most fitly moved by the condition and the wants of the world? *He* has died for us that He might redeem us from endless perdition. *They* are perishing, and He bids us publish among them the glad

tidings of salvation that they may hear and live. We sing —what do we sing?

> "Were the whole realm of nature mine,
> That were a present far too small."

Mrs. So-and-so sings it, and what does she give? Why, not less than her cheese-parings—it requires so much to do justice to her ardent feelings. Mr. Somebody-else sings it, and what does he give? Having no dogs, or not dogs enough to eat them all, he gives the surplus crumbs which fall from his well-furnished table—he cannot be satisfied with presenting any smaller offering to the Lord of glory! Seriously, that is about the proportion which ordinary givings for missionary purposes present to ordinary incomes. Whereas these men gave all they had. They gave their time, their talents, their property, themselves—their all. To set the gospel before perishing men was their work and their recreation, their meat and their drink, dearer to them than home, or friends, or life. They lived and toiled for it, and to further it they would at any time have been ready to die. Their methods were the methods of heroes,—their spirit the spirit of martyrs to a great and holy cause, not to be looked for in ordinary men, simply because ordinary men fall so far short of the heroic. But not to be dismissed either as unwise. Rather to be held up for admiration and emulation as embodiments of the highest wisdom. For it will not be said that even their devotedness was more than they owed to their Lord; and though we are so little like them, it must not be forgotten that He has done for us what He did for them, and that He requires of every one of us a spirit of consecration not inferior to theirs.

Next to the Apostle Paul, and it may be Francis Xavier,

if ever man laboured in a truly devoted spirit that man was William Carey. Although his work was less properly missionary in the technical sense than that of many others, it neither displayed less zeal nor was less useful in extending the cause of Christ. A reviewer of the Biography of the Rev. W. C. Burns, in a manner which seems to us scarcely fair, draws a comparison between him and Carey, and gives to Mr. Burns a higher place as a missionary because of his greater fervour and intensity. This estimate perhaps is not unnatural, and may not be considered very blameworthy, seeing that Mr. Burns is one with whom the writer is ecclesiastically allied. Nevertheless, we have good grounds for questioning both its fairness and its accuracy. Without any disparagement of Mr. Burns, we do not think that he deserves even to be placed in comparison with Carey. In everything which admits of comparison Carey excelled. Burns entered on missionary work when he found a society already formed, and waiting to send him out. Carey, amidst the opposition of his friends, had to originate the society under whose auspices he went forth. Burns went to a country in which missionaries had been labouring for years without molestation. Carey went to where the ruling powers resolutely closed the door against all missionary effort, and where at first everything done in that way had to be done without their knowledge, and under the constant apprehension of the work being interfered with, and himself banished, as not a few of his companions were. Burns went forth, no doubt, without either wife or child to cheer him in heathen solitude—such solitude as men find when surrounded with an alien people, but not without access to the congenial society of fellow-labourers already in the field. Carey started, leaving wife and child behind him, and would have gone as the pioneer of missionary effort into any heathen land, however

remote not only from Christian, but from European society; and actually determined at first "to bury himself among the natives," and the better to gain access to them "spent six years of his life surrounded by them alone." Burns' wants, which were, indeed, few, were all provided for by a society at home. Carey, while pursuing his great work, had by his own efforts to maintain both himself and his family. Burns no doubt engaged in his work with great singleness of purpose, as in everything which he put his hand unto, but not with greater singleness, and with less tenacity of purpose, than Carey evinced. It was still more true of him than of the other that to present the gospel to men was his life-long passion. This occupied all his thoughts and absorbed all his energies. More truly than most men, from the time he set sail for India he could say, "This one thing I do." His occupations, however varied they might be, were all subservient to this. All the proceeds of his labour, after the scantiest allowance for his personal and family wants, were devoted to the maintenance and extension of missionary operations. To open new stations for preaching the gospel, to issue new translations of the Word of God until the treasures in that casket had been made available for all the peoples of the East, was his one consuming desire. "The extension of the mission was a passion with him, the extinction of a station like the amputation of a limb." In the spirit of his famous sermon, he wrote to Dr. Ryland, after he had been more than twenty years in the field: "I intreat, I implore our dear brethren in England, not to think of the petty plan of lessening the number of stations, so as to bring their support within the bounds of their present income, but to bend all their attention and their exertions to the great object of increasing their finances, to meet the pressing demands that Providence makes on them. If your objects are large, the public will

contribute to their support; if you contract them, their liberality will immediately contract itself also." If he did not give himself up, like Mr. Burns, to itinerating work, it was not owing to an inferior zeal, but to the circumstances in which he was placed. Such work could not be openly attempted when he first went to India, except at the risk of his being immediately shipped off to England. Moreover there was still more important work waiting to be done. The Bible had been translated into Chinese long before Mr. Burns set foot in China. Carey was the first to attempt its translation into the language of the East. And to place the gospel before the eye of the people by such means is still more important than to publish it with the living voice. For, as he and his coadjutors said in one of their reports, "If the Scriptures be not translated and published, the most strenuous efforts will abide only for a season." Without the Bible, the missionary is comparatively unequipped. It is the armoury whence his weapons are drawn—the source of his supplies—what to the warrior is his base of operations. It goes moreover into localities where the missionary cannot find his way, and remains as a perpetual witness to the truth after he has passed into other regions. By the translation of the Scriptures Carey laid the foundation of all missionary effort in those lands. His work was the commencement and the corner-stone of the glorious superstructure which has since been reared. While he built on no other man's foundation, all subsequent labourers have built on his. In the Providence, therefore, which shut him up to work for which he was so pre-eminently qualified, there was ground for thankfulness rather than lamentation, even as the nature of his work does not diminish, but enhance, the honour reflected on the worker. For surely, next to being the instrument which the Divine Spirit employs to reveal His

will to men—the inspired medium of a Divine revelation—is the honour of being employed to render its treasures accessible to the inhabitants of any land. Who would not rather die, having opened the Word of God to any people to whom it was formerly a sealed book, than having conquered that people by the sword and made them subjects of the British crown? To have shed on their darkness the light of heaven,—to have cast across their horizon the streaks of dawn which are destined to rise through the mists of ignorance and error and superstition into the meridian sunshine of a cloudless day,—what boon to the nation—what honour to its benefactor, can be compared with that!

How arduously he toiled at this work all who knew him bore testimony. His life was one prolonged incessant strain, interrupted only by the period of sickness which its intensity induced. Take the following account of his occupations for a day—"He rose at a quarter before six, read a chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and spent the time till seven in private devotions. He then had family prayer in Bengalee with the servants, after which he read Persian with a moonshee who was in attendance. As soon as breakfast was over, he sat down to the translation of the Ramayan with a pundit till ten; when he proceeded to the college, and attended its duties till two. Returning home, he examined a proof-sheet of the Bengalee translation of Jeremiah, and dined with his friend Mr. Rolt. After dinner, with the aid of the chief pundit of the College, he translated a chapter of Matthew into Sanscrit. At six, he sat down with the Telinga pundit to study that language, and then preached an English sermon to a congregation of about forty. The service being ended at nine, he sat down to the translation of Ezekiel into Bengalee,—he had thrown aside his former version, and was now retranslating the

prophets. At eleven, the duties of the day closed; and after reading a chapter in the Greek Testament, and commending himself to God, he retired to rest."

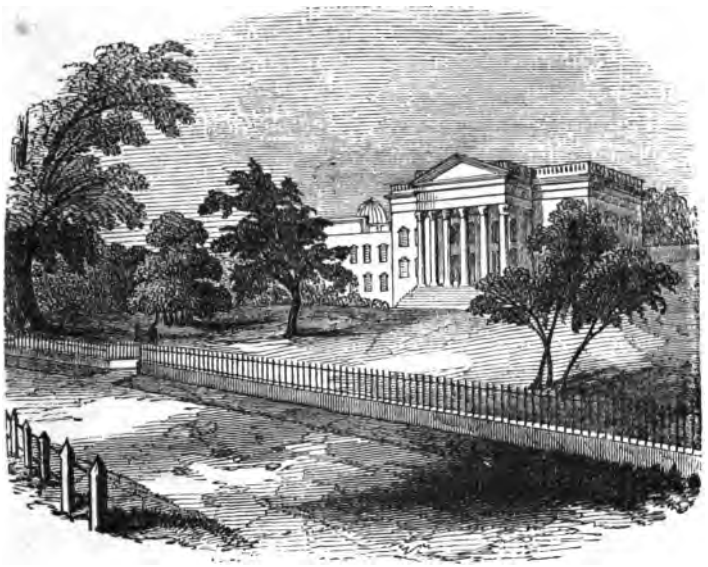
He and his colleagues were not given to boasting, but when put on their defence they could write :—

"To support the cause we have exerted ourselves almost beyond our strength, and, in a climate which drinks up the spirits, have laid on ourselves labours which few constitutions in England could bear. We have deprived ourselves of all recreation, and the hours which, after the labours of the day, others devote to social intercourse with their families, we have given to extra labour or to particular studies. We have lived at one common table, and subjected the regimen of our families to each other's will, that we might devote the expense of separate establishments to that cause to which we have devoted ourselves. Were we taken away by death, our families must be turned out on the charity of the public, and, indeed, almost without a rupee, had we not husbanded the little we possessed before we joined the Mission, and which after eighteen years' accumulation is not equal to four months' produce of the labour we devote to the cause."

Labouring in such a spirit, their achievements were wonderful. Their remoter results no one can fully trace, but even the visible were such as almost to surpass belief. At the time of their death sixteen mission stations, with a larger number of sub-stations, employing in all forty-nine agents of one kind and another, were dependent on them for support. And though they lived humbly, almost meanly, and died poor, their united contributions to the cause of missions amounted to £80,000. How they must have toiled and economised to be able out of their deep poverty to give such a magnificent sum! And how entire

the consecration, which gave so much, and reserved nothing for themselves! And the paid labours which supported them and realised this amount were nothing to their more directly evangelistic efforts, their mission work proper, for which no payment was received. They not only received no salary, but in addition to earning so much for the mission by their several occupations, they toiled for it directly as we believe few missionaries have done either before or since. While under Mr. Ward's superintendence, no less than nineteen presses were at one time constantly employed printing Scriptures and tracts, the charge of this was but a small part of his work, [the chief object to which his attention was given being the training of young men for missionary duties. Dr. Marshman, in addition to all his other labours, translated the whole Bible into Chinese, and published a Clavis Sinica, or key to the Chinese language; while at the same time he bestowed on his own countrymen the first translation of the works of Confucius. They were the first to print the Chinese characters in movable type, instead of the cumbrous wooden blocks which had previously been used; and missionaries in China sent their books to be printed at Serampore. Carey's great linguistic abilities found scope for exercise not only in acquiring, but giving instruction in the various and difficult languages of the East. In addition to his various translations of the Word of God, his philological works were such as it would seem impossible for any one man to accomplish even with all the advantages of early training and exclusive devotion to such pursuits. He had been only about twenty years in India when Wilberforce said of him in the House of Commons: "He resolutely applied himself to the study of the learned languages; after making a considerable proficiency in them,

he applied himself to several of the oriental tongues, more especially to that which I understand is regarded as the parent of them all, the Sanscrit; in which last his proficiency is greater than that of Sir William Jones or any other European. Of several of these languages he has already published grammars, of one or two of them a dic-



SERAMPORE COLLEGE.

tionary; and he has in contemplation still greater enterprises. All this time, Sir, he is labouring indefatigably as a missionary, with a warmth of zeal only equalled by that with which he prosecutes his other labours." Mr. Marshman describes his achievements thus:—"He had along with Dr. Marshman published three volumes of the Ramayun. He had given to the world grammars of the Bengalee, the

Sanscrit, and the Mahratta languages, was compiling a grammar in the language of Orissa, and carrying grammars of the Telinga and Punjaubee through the press. He was collecting materials for a universal dictionary of the Oriental languages derived from the Sanscrit, with the corresponding words in Greek and Hebrew. He had finished printing a Mahratta dictionary, and commenced the Bengalee, which eventually extended to three quarto volumes, and by which he did for that language what Dr. Johnson had done for the English."

Other auxiliary means were not neglected. He and his colleagues interested themselves in everything fitted to promote the welfare of the people. Schools were established in various parts of India, and conducted at their expense. A college was founded—literary, scientific, and theological—for the instruction of native youths, and especially for the training of converts for missionary work, to the funds of which they contributed, in ten years, no less than £15,000. They started and conducted newspapers and magazines, both in English and Bengalee. Hospitals, benevolent institutions, and savings banks were originated through their instrumentality; and even the Agricultural Society of India, which grew into a thing of great importance, and became "one of the most vigorous and successful agencies of improvement," owed its existence to Dr. Carey, whose bust, in token of the gratitude of its members, now adorns its hall.

But all these labours were subordinate to that which constituted Carey's great work—the translation of the Word of God. He saw that this was the first requisite to the successful conduct of the missionary enterprise, and set himself with characteristic determination to supply the lack. "I can only say," he writes, two years after his arrival in India, "that after my family's obtaining a bare allowance, my whole income—and

some months much more—goes for the purposes of the gospel, in supporting persons to assist in the translation of the Bible, in writing out copies of it, and in teaching school. I am indeed poor, and shall always be so until the Bible is published in Bengalee and Hindostanee, and the people want no further instruction." His achievements in this work far exceeded the most sanguine expectations which he had ventured to form. His plan seems to have been first to translate the New Testament, and then, as soon as the translation was published, to open a mission station among the people by whom the language was spoken. He had not been more than five years in India when he had completed the New Testament in Bengalee. Thirteen years later he wrote to a friend: "When I first entered on the translation of the Scriptures into the Bengalee language, I thought that if ever I should live to see it completed, I could say with Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word;' but He has preserved me, not only to see the version finished, but has given me an opportunity of making many corrections, in succeeding editions, in various parts of it; and also has preserved me to see portions of the Bible printed in Orissa, Sanscrit, Hindostanee, Mahratta, Carnatee, Telinga, and Punjaubee; Matthew, in Chinese, and a beginning in the Burmese translation." And even this is but a small part of what he ultimately accomplished. Before his death, in conjunction with his colleagues, he had actually, to use the language of the Bible Society, "been instrumental in giving to the tribes of Asia the Sacred Scriptures, in whole or in part, in between thirty and forty different languages."

To few men has it been given to leave such a record of devoted sanctified labour, designed to promote the best interests of the human race. It may be questioned if even

the Apostle Paul brought the gospel into contact with so many minds; for the populations of the countries in which he preached were less numerous than those whom Carey supplied with the Word of Life. The blessings which that Word is fitted to convey to the nations in which it circulates can only be conceived by those who know by experience the salutary influence it exerts on the character and condition and prospects of mankind. Its translation into any language is the opening of a source of life-giving, transforming, and elevating power to the peoples by whom that language is spoken. The most gracious results attend the reception of its message, and the advance of humanity towards all that is good and true is in proportion as its truths are moulding individual character, and penetrating to the springs of national life. We should prove traitors to our profession, and belie our experience, did we not regard it as the best boon which can be conferred on any people, and he who translates it into their language as their greatest benefactor.

Its circulation throughout heathen nations is enough to secure the downfall of every system of idolatry, and the removal of all the evils that follow in their train. Formidable as those systems are, venerable for age, supported by class interests, rooted in the feelings and habits of the people, they cannot withstand the power of that Word which liveth and abideth for ever. Like as it was with the magic castle in ancient story—with its moat, and drawbridge, and portcullis, and solid wall, frowning battlements, and brave defenders, it defied the besieger's power. But when the trumpet sounded loud and shrill, that castle trembled to its foundation, and moat, and drawbridge, and portcullis, and wall, and battlement, and defenders, exhaled into vapour and vanished from the scene. So the formidable systems of idolatry, which bid defiance to all human power

and skill, when God's Word shall make its voice heard and its truths known among their votaries, shall disappear from the lands over which they have cast their withering shadow, that the way may be prepared for the coming of the kingdom of Christ.

The effects it has already produced in the countries into which Carey introduced it are such, considering the time which has elapsed, as exceed his most sanguine expectations. He himself lived to see more than a thousand converts. He gave the first blow to the system which was said to be invincible, and broke some links of the chain with which it kept the people in thraldom, by the baptism of converts of high caste, who, after their profession of faith, mingled with, and were united in marriage to, their brethren of inferior degree. He saw the cruel and monstrous practice of Suttee abolished. He saw the dawn of a sound education, before which many of their absurd beliefs were destined to take their flight. He saw Christian churches formed, and Christian communities gathered around them. And since his time, notwithstanding all that has been said of the failure of missions, the influence of the Bible on Indian beliefs and customs is marvellous. While tens of thousands of converts have been gathered into the various churches, the people's belief in their idols has been destroyed, and the worst features of heathenism have disappeared even from among those who have not yet cordially embraced Christianity.

It is no slight honour for any man to have been chosen by God to perform such a work as this. It ranks him indubitably among the foremost benefactors of the world. And when men's actions shall be judged in the clearer light of the latter day, and on the pillar of fame shall be inscribed the names of those who have rendered services to mankind, high in the illustrious list, far above that of many of the

world's warriors and statesmen, who have filled the world with their far-sounding fame, will be found that of the "consecrated cobbler" and village pastor—the once obscure and despised, but now honoured and electric name of WILLIAM CAREY.

ROBERT HALL,

The Preacher.

THERE is no man who, by his character and talents, is better entitled to a place among Baptist Worthies than Robert Hall. We select him as being by universal consent the preacher of his denomination—one of the greatest preachers which any denomination has produced in his own or any age—"the prince of preachers," as not without reason he has been designated. It will, we believe, be of service to our young men, and will further the purpose which we seek to promote, if we make them acquainted with the prominent features of this great and good man's character and life.

His outer history is soon told. Almost barren of incident as is the life of an ordinary Baptist minister in England, the only facts in his life worthy of notice may be comprised in brief space.

He was the son of a minister of the same name, pastor of a Baptist Church at Arnsby, in Leicestershire, and was born on the 2nd of May, 1764. Being the youngest of fourteen children, there could not be much affluence, we may suppose, in his father's house; but what was better for him, there were books to which almost from his infancy he

had access, and from which he began to draw those mental stores which afterwards became so ample and were used with such good effect.

After a delicate infancy he was sent first to a dame school in his native village, and afterwards to a school a few miles off, conducted by a Mr. Symmons. Here he evinced considerable precocity of intellect, reading with great delight such books as "Butler's Analogy," and "Jonathan Edwards on the Affections" and the "Will"—rather heavy tasks, one would think, for a boy,—and before he had completed his eleventh year, so thoroughly mastering such lessons as were given, that "his master ceded his superiority, and frankly confessed his inability to keep pace with his pupil."

It is further stated—and the fact may perhaps be deemed still more prophetic of his after-course—that about this age he was in the habit of composing essays and sermons, and preaching the latter to an audience composed of his brothers and sisters, who no doubt, as critics more kind than wise, very highly appreciated them. His speaking powers, however, do not appear even then to have been contemptible, for at a gentleman's house at Kettering, where he went on a visit shortly afterwards, and before he was sent to the Theological Academy, his host was in the habit of calling in the neighbours that they might listen to this boy preacher—a kindness on the part of his friend for which, we may well believe, Hall in his later years did not feel over grateful.

After a year and a half's tuition, under the care of the Rev. John Ryland, of Northampton, where he is reported to have made great progress in his studies, he entered the Academy at Bristol at the age of fifteen, and continued there, a diligent and ambitious student, for three years. Strange to say, his gift of speaking seems here to have failed him once in a very signal and mortifying manner. The occasion was

the sermon which, in accordance with college rules, he had to preach before the tutors and students. "After proceeding for a short time, much to the gratification of his auditory, he suddenly paused, covered his face with his hand, exclaimed, 'Oh! I have lost all my ideas,' and sat down, his hands still hiding his face." A second attempt to preach on the same subject the week following "was accompanied by a second failure, still more painful to witness, and more grievous to bear. He hastened from the vestry, and on retiring to his room exclaimed, 'If *this* does not humble me, the devil *must* have me.' Such," says his biographer, "were the early efforts of him whose humility afterwards became as conspicuous as his talents, and who for nearly half a century excited universal attention and admiration by the splendour of his pulpit eloquence."

He left Bristol for King's College, Aberdeen, in 1781, and after remaining there about four years, graduated as Master of Arts in 1785. It is the opinion of some, and perhaps there is some slight foundation for it, that distinguished scholarship is not very conducive to effective preaching. A recent writer on the pulpit speaks very depreciatingly of scholarly ministers who have letters appended to their names. These letters he seems to consider guarantees for pulpit dulness. And it may be just possible, as we have already admitted, that in some of our colleges too much attention has been given to learning, and too little to preaching—that men's capabilities, not being sufficiently considered, they are passed through a too uniform process, some as the consequence being injured by that which proves beneficial to others; but for all that it is a great mistake to suppose that cultivated intellect is out of its place in the pulpit. The steady light, after all, is better than brilliant phosphoric flashes which die out in deeper darkness; better

is the lamp that burns on, though not over brightly, than the rocket which goes up with a rush, scattering showers of sparks, and comes down a charred and half-burnt stick; or the squib which goes fizzing along and expires with a sudden crack, or without crack dies away in smoke and stench. Even moonlight is better for the traveller's guidance than the erratic though brilliant corruscations of the lightning. And it may be that your quiet and thoughtful men, whose academic degrees really mean mental development and not mere cramming for examination, though they be less noisy and eccentric than some others, may not be less useful in guiding men aright. Besides, it is not the case that scholarly men are always the least effective, even in the popular point of view. There are scores of living proofs to the contrary. And not a few of whose life-work, because of their having finished their course, we are better capable of judging, might be appealed to in vindication of the fact that distinguished bearing and effective eloquence are very often combined. Chalmers was a famous teacher of mathematics before he became the most powerful preacher in Scotland. And Robert Hall's college course gave no slight promise of his after greatness. He and his friend Macintosh stood in the front rank of the students of Aberdeen, and were generally recognised by their fellows as men of superior gifts and attainments. Their fondness for reading Greek authors, and their proficiency, led to their being designated, partly in admiration perhaps, and partly in envy, "Plato and Herodotus." Hall, according to the testimony of Principal Jack, achieved "great success in his mathematical and philosophical studies, and was the first scholar of his class in the various branches of education taught at college." And it is right to add on the same testimony, that "it was not as a scholar alone Mr. Hall's

reputation was great at College. He was considered by all the students as a model of correct and regular deportment, of religious and moral habits, of friendly and benevolent affections."

He had not finished his studies at Aberdeen when he was invited to become assistant to the Rev. Caleb Evans, minister of Broad Mead Chapel, Bristol. This invitation he accepted on condition of being allowed to pursue his studies during the college session. In addition to the duties of the pulpit, he undertook those of classical tutor at the Baptist College in the same city, and appears to have performed both with no small measure of success. It must have required great application, as well as great ability, for a youth of twenty-one to give such satisfaction as a teacher of candidates for the ministry, and, at the same time, to render his own ministry so attractive that, from far and near, men crowded to listen to his preaching,—drawn, not by those eccentricities by which men sometimes gain a widespread but shortlived notoriety, but by the sterling excellences which made every hearer feel that a mind and heart of no common order poured forth from that pulpit, in strains of eloquence and forms of beauty, the ample stores which had been gathered from fields of classical and historic lore, and were held in readiness for use by one who knew well how to turn them to the best account.

In 1790, he was invited to Cambridge, to the pulpit which had been filled for years by the Rev. John Robinson. The gifts of the previous minister, and his renunciation of orthodoxy for a mild form of Unitarianism, into which he had drawn some of his people, rendered this probably the most difficult sphere in all the Baptist denomination. Those who deemed themselves "intellectual," and were tinged with the Unitarian heresy, were doubly gratified by Hall's appointment. As a young man he had been somewhat speculative

—could not take things for granted—and by straight-laced Baptists of his time was considered not quite orthodox. What a ground of exultation it was therefore for his Unitarian hearers, that one who could minister so well to their intellectual tastes was also in favour of their theological sentiments! Their gratification, however, was of short duration. If they were pleased with him, he was almost disgusted with them. Their manifest coldness, and deficiency in devoutly serious feeling, had the effect of curing his free thinking, and leading to his more cordial adoption of the more orthodox creed, which, notwithstanding the difficulties it presented to his intellect, was evidently so much more powerful and salutary in its influence on the heart.

His ministry at Cambridge extended over a period of fourteen years. In so far as influence is concerned, it was, perhaps, as good a field as the Baptist denomination could have supplied, and he occupied it with growing popularity and usefulness. Members of the University, from heads of colleges to undergraduates, were among his hearers. It was the scene of some of his greatest efforts. Themes and events in which the nation, and even humanity at large, was interested, engaged his thoughts, and became the subjects of his eloquent utterance. His "Apology for the Freedom of the Press" was called forth by the French Revolution; and the excesses of the Democracy, when unbelief attained its apotheosis, and showed in what follies a nation may indulge, and what cruelties perpetrate, when it casts off all religious restraints, elicited his magnificent sermon on "Modern Infidelity," in which, with lofty, scathing eloquence, he depicts the nature and the tendency of that last-born child of hell. His "Reflections on War" was a production of the same period, and worthy of its neighbours. And the same thing

may be said of a later publication, "On the Sentiments Proper to the Present Crisis." Any one of these is not only enough to establish a wide and lasting reputation, but is altogether unequalled. No man can hope to touch with anything like rival interest the subjects he has handled in such masterly manner. They stand apart from all compositions of their kind—alone unrivalled—the envy and the despair of all who have to follow him.

Cambridge, though it was a sphere for which he was admirably qualified, was not that which his health required. Towards the latter part of his stay there an acute pain in the back, which had troubled him more or less from his childhood, was sometimes excruciating. The flatness of the country, too, one cannot help imagining, had something to do with the mental malady with which he was twice over afflicted, and which ultimately led to his removal. "'Tis a dismally flat country, sir," he said to a friend of his, "dismally flat. Before I came to Cambridge, I had read in the 'Prize Poem,' and in some other works of fancy, of 'the banks of the Cam,' of 'the sweetly flowing stream,' and so on; but when I arrived here I was sadly disappointed. When I first saw the river, as I passed over King's College Bridge, I could not help exclaiming, 'Why, the stream is standing still to see people drown themselves;' and that, I am sorry to say, is a permanent feeling with me." "Shocking place for spirits, sir," he added; "I wish you may not find it so; it must be the very focus of suicides. Were you ever at Bristol, sir? There is scenery, scenery worth looking upon, and worth thinking of; and so there is at Aberdeen, with all its surrounding barrenness. The trees on the banks of the Don are as fine as those on the banks of the Cam; and the river is alive, sir: it falls over precipices, and foams and dashes, so as to invigorate and inspire those who witness it. The

Don is a *river*, sir, and the Severn is a *river*; but not even a poet would so designate *the Cam*, unless by an obvious figure he termed it the *sleeping* river."

He was not over fond of exercise, and he was very fond of study. And the flat country, while it had a depressing effect on his spirits, led him to keep at home, and to indulge those habits of severe mental exercise under which his health was suffering. Twelve hours a day he used to spend in laborious abstraction. When friends went to visit him in the evening, they would find him so exhausted that they could only persuade him to take some narcotic and retire to rest. The result was what is usual in such cases. The overwrought brain gave way. Mental disorder ensued, and this man of mighty intellect had to be placed under a physician's charge. Happily the treatment adopted was so effectual, that in about two months his health was sufficiently restored to admit of his resuming his labours. In about a year there was a relapse; and though again he soon recovered, it was deemed unadvisable that he should return to Cambridge.

The over-study which clouded this brilliant intellect for a time may not have been judicious—very likely it was not; but unquestionably it contributed to the almost unparalleled excellence of his preaching, and the extraordinary impression it produced. No amount of talent would ever have made him the preacher he was, unless he had agonised at his work. Where that is done in listless or perfunctory manner the most splendid abilities will fail. Have we not seen preachers who did little or nothing because, though possessing almost every talent, they lacked the one which would have turned them all to good account? Without any great amount of effort they are capable of producing weekly two or three respectable sermons. Their facility of com-

position and power of utterance render but little study requisite. Hence their sermons are always respectable, and seldom anything more. Their fatal facility proves their greatest snare. Content with what they easily produce, they never toil and agonize at their work as men of greatly inferior talents have often done with good result, and no intense or overpowering impression is produced by their ministry; for this is only done by sweat of heart and brain. They never rise above, as they never fall below, a respectable mediocrity, and not by that are men greatly moved. He who is to succeed must not be content to preach well, coming constantly short of his own best; he must be ever stretching himself to the utmost and striving to outstrip himself, aspiring after increasing excellence, and straining every nerve with that intent, like the runners and wrestlers in the ancient Grecian games. Preaching must be a passion with him—excellence therein the object of an intense longing which nothing can satisfy. Brooding over his theme until his soul is set on fire with it, catching in the process an inspiration which elevates his conceptions and intensifies his utterances, he must go into the pulpit bearing his whole man with him, every faculty strung up into its best and loftiest state. This should be the aim, so far as human nature can bear it, of every preacher of the cross. The most gifted men without it will not be greatly successful. He who has ten talents and is content to take only one into the pulpit, or who suffers them to lie in disuse the greater part of the week, is, notwithstanding his ability, very likely to fail.

We do not plead for elaboration simply. They are greatly mistaken who suppose that Hall elaborated merely for elaboration's sake, trimming and balancing his sentences to please the ear, at the expense of depriving them of all point and power. He had indeed a most fastidious taste

but it was made subservient to his earnest desire to secure for what he said an entrance into other minds. His feeling was as intense as his intellect was lofty and his preparation laborious. It was this, in fact, which made him work so hard. The painful malady from which he suffered would have caused other men to pass their days in idleness. Not driving him from work, it added to the intensity with which it was done. And the brief mental eclipse by which his labours were twice interrupted was but the liability of a mind which, seeing more clearly than others, was deeply and powerfully moved by its own vivid conceptions. But for this no amount of elaboration would have made his preaching so powerful. For elaboration without feeling is often a hindrance to effect. Men may be too fastidious to do anything which will impress others powerfully. They are so afraid of offending against good taste that they dare not give scope to feeling. The result is, that their clearly thought out, and well arranged, and carefully composed, and elegantly expressed discourses, produce little or no impression, because they speak as if they did not mean them to be believed, or as if it mattered little whether they were believed or not. The fault is not one of manner, or it might easily be corrected. It is a defect in the preacher's feelings; and to attempt to correct it by altering the manner is simply to aggravate the evil. It is not uncommon for some preachers to simulate earnestness by shouting. They confound intense feeling with loud utterance, forgetting that earnestness is not characteristically loud, and never unnaturally so; but rather quiet, keen, incisive, intense. Mimic thunder is one of the most contemptible things, and to all discerning minds appears supremely ridiculous. Even real thunder is but the report which follows the quiet lightning stroke. God may be in the thunder or the earthquake, but oftener than either He is in

the "still small voice." And He is never in the mechanical excitement, which resembles spiritual power no more than the stage glare and the rattling of a sheet of metal, the thunder and lightning of the sky. If we go back to Apostolic models, it is difficult to conceive of anything more at variance with their quiet solemnity than the state of excitement approaching hysteria into which men sometimes lash themselves by continuous shouting. If their conception of spiritual power be correct, there was no such thing in Peter's sermon. That does not contain so much as one interjection, not so much as an "ah" or an "oh." There is no tearing of the hair, nor stamping of the foot, no attempt to persuade his hearers that he is terribly in earnest, telling them how he could weep tears of blood for them, and has no sleep on account of them, and would gladly die for them—nothing of the kind. It is a singularly sober, direct, matter-of-fact address, void of all attempt to get up excitement beyond that which its substance is fitted to produce, calm and dignified as a judicial sentence, yet pregnant with latent fire, all the more homegoing and forcible for its calmness, because the preacher speaks like one who is sure of his ground, and who resorts to no human expedient because his dependence is placed entirely on the Divine. He is far too much in earnest to speak of his earnestness or to think of himself at all. His thoughts are absorbed in the message he has to deliver, and the objects he seeks to gain thereby. He is eloquent simply because he is natural—because self is abnegated; and without thought of self he speaks to others with nothing present to his consciousness save the theme and purpose with which his mind and heart are full. This is the true cure, we think, for that coldness and indifference of manner by which the success of some preachers is hindered. It is not the assumption of this or that manner, but

that they should brood over, until they more deeply feel, the awful solemnity and importance of their theme and their work. Then, whether their temperament leads them to speak quietly or loudly, in either case they will speak naturally, and men will not fail to be deeply impressed by the truth and importance of what they say.

Hall's afflictive dispensation brought a letter from his friend Macintosh, who was then Recorder of Bombay, which, both because of the sentiments it so delicately and gracefully expresses, and because it is illustrative of the writer's high esteem for his friend, we venture to quote. After a few introductory words he says:—

"It happened to me a few days ago, in drawing up (merely for my own use) a short sketch of my life, that I had occasion to give a faithful statement of my recollection of the circumstances of my first acquaintance with you. On the most impartial survey of my early life, I could see nothing which tended so much to excite and invigorate my understanding, and to direct it towards high, though, perhaps, scarcely accessible objects, as my intimacy with you. Five-and-twenty years are now past since we first met, yet hardly anything has occurred since which has left a deeper or more agreeable impression on my mind. I now remember the extraordinary union of bright fancy with acute intellect, which would have excited more admiration than it has done if it had been dedicated to the amusement of the great and the learned, instead of being consecrated to the far more noble office of consoling, instructing, and reforming the poor and the forgotten.

"It was then too early for me to discover that extreme purity, which in a mind pre-occupied with the low realities of life, would have been no natural companion of so much activity and ardour, but which thoroughly detached you"

(alluding to Mr. Hall's mental aberration) "from the world, and made you an inhabitant of regions where alone it is possible to be always active without impurity, and where the ardour of your sensibility had unbounded scope amidst the inexhaustible combinations of beauty and excellence.

"It is not given to us to preserve an exact medium. Nothing is so difficult as to decide how much ideal models ought to be combined with experience; how much of the future should be let in to the present, in the progress of the human mind. To ennoble and purify, without raising above the sphere of our usefulness; to qualify us for what we ought to seek, without unfitting us for that to which we must submit, are great and difficult problems, which can be but imperfectly solved.

"It is certain the child may be too manly, not only for his present enjoyments, but for his future prospects. Perhaps, my good friend, you have fallen into this error of superior natures. From this error has, I think, arisen that calamity with which it has pleased Providence to visit you, which, to a mind less fortified by reason and religion, I should not dare to mention, but which I really consider in you as little more than the indignant struggles of a pure mind with the low realities which surround it—the fervent aspirations after regions more congenial to it—and a momentary blindness, produced by the fixed contemplation of objects too bright for human vision. I may say, in this case, in a far grander sense than that in which the words were originally spoken by our great poet,

'—— and yet
The light which led astray was light from Heaven.'

"On your return to us, you must surely have found consolation in the only terrestrial produce which is pure and truly exquisite—in the affections and attachments you have

inspired, which you were most worthy to inspire, and which no human pollution can rob of their heavenly nature. If I were to prosecute the reflections, and indulge the feelings which at this moment fill my mind, I should soon venture to doubt, whether for a calamity derived from such a source, and attended with such consolations, I should so far yield to the views and opinions of men as to seek to condole with you. But I check myself, and exhort you, my most worthy friend, to check your best propensities, for the sake of attaining their object. You cannot live *for* men, without living *with* them. Serve God, then, by the active service of men. Contemplate more the good you *can* do, than the evil you can only lament. . . .

"Let me hear from you soon and often. Farewell, my dear friend. Yours ever most faithfully,

"J. MACINTOSH."

The affliction which is thus so touchingly alluded to was contemplated by Mr. Hall, after his recovery, with true Christian feeling, and the remembrance of it evidently exerted a most salutary influence on his character. The Dedication to God, which he writes afterwards, is a striking manifestation of his humility and devotion. It shows how much the dispensation had been sanctified; and we can very well imagine that, if it did not increase the brilliancy, it must have deepened the spiritual power of his ministrations.

After a short time spent in Leicestershire, where, as his health improved, he preached occasionally in the villages, he ultimately settled as the minister of the congregation then meeting in Harvey Lane. The church, which was very low, soon revived under his ministry. During the twenty years he remained there the chapel was twice enlarged, and continued well filled to the last.

In 1808 he married, a step which greatly added to his

comfort, and had it been taken sooner, might have been instrumental in preserving him from his distressing mental affliction. While there "his church regularly increased. The whole county of Leicester felt the influence of his presence. He zealously promoted all the great philanthropic and religious institutions. Bible and Missionary Societies, then in their infancy, met with his ready and powerful aid. Christians of all denominations were embraced in the circle of his charity, and he was claimed as the property, not of a sect, but of the church and the public at large. Through the press he still continued, although at rarer intervals, to pour forth the mellowed fruits of his powerful intellect." One of the publications of that time was his critique in the *Eclectic Review* of a pamphlet entitled "Zeal without Innovation," in which, with rare talent and temper, he vindicated the Evangelical clergymen of the Church, such as his friend Mr. Robinson, against the charges of their intolerant assailants. It was here, too, that he published his sermon on "The Advantages of Knowledge to the Lower Classes," a subject not most suited to his style, but which he managed to treat with great originality and freshness. Other sermons and productions belong to the same period. Among others we may mention that on "The Discouragements of the Christian Minister," and the "Address to Eustace Carey on his Designation as a Missionary," both of which sustain his high reputation. But the greatest of all, it will be generally considered, was a discourse on the death of the Princess Charlotte. "No production of the press on the subject could for a moment be compared to it. A nation was weeping, and genius poured out its strains of panegyric and lamentation in a thousand pulpits; but far in advance of all in power, grace, dignified and Christian patriotism, purity and majesty of style, eloquence, and wide excursiveness of

thought, was that of Robert Hall. In reading it one marvels at the imperial grandeur of the execution, as the mighty preacher groups together, and manages with a master hand, and with the apparent ease of a child at play, the various momentous considerations which the event was fitted to awaken in a mind capable of comprehension and survey. It is Christian genius weeping and uttering wisdom at the tomb of a virtuous princess. She was at once of royal blood, and of gentle, humble piety. Her death was the extinction of a nation's hope. Over her grave England was a mourner. The loss, who could idealise?—none but he who could idealise the elevation of her rank, her rare endowments, the influence of her illustrious example, and a nation's fond expectations, now for ever brought to an end! Robert Hall's panegyric and lament were representative; he put in the form of language what a generation *felt*, but which he only could combine into one, extract the essence of, and put forth in palpable and burning speech."

He remained in Leicester about twenty years, and then returned to the scene of his early ministrations at Broadmead, Bristol, in 1825. He was now over sixty years of age, and his preaching had by this time lost something of the brilliancy and majesty which had marked his earlier years, though it was, there is reason to believe, not less instructive or spiritually profitable. He laboured there for six years, and was actually engaged almost till the day when the paroxysms of pain, to which he had been subject for some time, terminated his life.

Such is a brief summary of the facts of his life. It contained but little incident. It moved through no elevated scenes. He was not one of those who attract notice because of being placed in a prominent position. If he became

widely known, it was simply because of the resplendent lustre of his qualities, which shone out from his obscure sphere until it paled by its brightness many of the tapers which were set on high,—just as the sun, while yet himself beneath the horizon, sheds radiance enough over the landscape to eclipse all lesser lights. This, and no adventitious circumstances, was what drew around the Baptist pulpit the most eminent members of the Senate and the Bar, who were not over ready to listen, even amid the attractions of cathedral architecture and music, to the most gifted dignitaries of their own Church.

We referred at the outset to the proud designation which has been given to him by those who called him "The Prince of Preachers"; and the more we acquaint ourselves with him, the less are we inclined to question his right to bear the honour. He was unquestionably a prince among preachers; nor is it easy to see where, either among his contemporaries or successors, there is one who, in the higher elements of pulpit power, will compare with him. He derived little help from any external advantage, except that his figure was commanding, and his eye bright and penetrating. He resorted to none of the tricks of oratory. It was to his lofty eloquence alone—the fit vehicle of his thought—that he owed his triumph. There have been men who produced a wider impression, and men whose utterances have excited a louder applause, but we know not where to look for one who by clear and lofty thought embodied in elegant and magnificent form, and given out in earnest and impassioned speech, was so fitted to satisfy the educated taste, and to stir the popular heart. Clearness and profundity, strength and beauty, simplicity and grandeur, chastened severity and refinement of taste, wealth of illustration, with deep intensity of feeling, appear to have been

combined in him in unparalleled degree. Chalmers, by the momentum of his nature, may have borne his hearers along on the torrent of his eloquence in equally resistless manner, but he never raised them to such sublime heights; for, imperial as his imagination was, it could not soar like Hall's; and there was a mannerism in his style which, though forcible, offended the fastidious taste, of which the other was entirely free. Edward Irving's style was more gorgeous—Miltonic in its long, involved sentences, and rich in its colouring as cloth of gold; and in virtue of his peculiarly commanding figure and powerful voice he could have lorded it over a larger assembly. But Irving lacked the calm, clear judgment which in Hall was generally supreme, holding all other powers under its control, and marshalling them at its pleasure. Whitfield was better fitted to sway the passions of a crowd; for his voice was magnificent, and his elocution perfect, but he had none of Hall's mental power. With living preachers we may not compare him without appearing invidious; and we therefore leave unnoticed some whom we might name—not to compare them with Hall, but rather, while appreciating their merits, to show wherein their style contrasts with his. We do not say that they are inferior on this account, for there are different orders of excellence; and different and even contrasting styles may be equally well adapted for the object at which they aim, and the audiences to which they are addressed. And happily we could point to more than one preacher in our own body who are not less distinguished in their line than Hall was in his, and whose names may be fairly quoted along with his as shedding lustre on the denomination of which they form part.

Until lately we had among us a preacher of another denomination, now, alas! with us no more, whose eloquence

produced no ordinary impression. Of all preachers of the ornate type to whom we have been privileged to listen, we would name Morley Punshon as the first. In his happiest efforts, when his memory served him well, he was marvellously effective. His rapid utterance, his well-chosen words, his poetical colouring, his telling hits, rendered him altogether the most exciting speaker we have ever heard. He could elicit thunders of applause—or, as our American friends say, "bring down the house." And in that we have both his strength and his weakness. The highest style of eloquence is not that which produces noisy demonstrative excitement, but that which stirs the deeper feelings of the soul. You clap your hands and shout when you witness the agile feats of an equestrian performer. Amid the grand objects of nature you are awed into silence. Your pleasure is such that you almost hold your breath lest you should lose some of it, or disturb it with the slightest sound. Eloquence will produce the latter effect, rhetoric the former. Now Hall is eloquent in the highest sense of the word. Punshon, though not without eloquence, was grandly rhetorical. His sentences are elaborated for effect. The thought is sometimes commonplace enough, but the dressing is good, and the language nervous and powerful. Hence, when his memory was at fault, and he had to recall his words, he was like Samson shorn of his locks. You wanted the roll and the ring on which rhetoric so much depends. Hall could labour too; he would weigh the respective merits of "pierce" and "penetrate" before choosing either; but he never elaborates for effect, but only to please his own fastidious taste, and to present in the clearest, simplest, chastest, most forcible and expressive language, his beautiful and lofty thought. Hall, too, is effective without labour; often most effective when he does not attempt to elaborate. Greatness is

his natural element. He beautifies and elevates every theme on which he touches even in the most cursory manner, leaving on it the impress of his imperial mind. And at his best, so independent is he of rhetorical aid, that were he to stammer and hesitate ever so much, you would still be impressed with the beauty and power of his utterances. This distinction is of course roughly and broadly drawn. We do not deny eloquence to Punshon, nor rhetoric to Hall; but only use the two words to denote their distinguishing peculiarities. Rhetoric is the style which, though it requires good thought to sustain it, stirs the pulse by its sounds. Eloquence the style which derives its beauty from the thought which it accurately mirrors. You see a company of soldiers marching to the sound of the trumpet and the roll of the drum. You are impressed with the music, and with the measured tramp, tramp, tramp. That you may call rhetoric. If in addition you have banners waving, and sunshine flashing on helmet and spear, you may call it, if you like, rhetoric in its highest form; rhetoric rising sometimes into eloquence, having its faultless rhythm beautified and lighted up with poetic tints. You have followed the course of some mighty river, and seen it now rushing with the force of a cataract over its rocky bed; now flowing smoothly and majestically, reflecting the crags and foliage on its banks, and the azure blue and fleecy clouds of the overarching sky. That is a fair representation of eloquence. Or, changing the figure, you have seen the statues, or photographs of the statues, of Dante and Beatrice. That beautiful, white-robed female figure is a good representation of Hall's eloquence. His thought is not naked, but the drapery is never cumbersome, and does not conceal, but renders more manifest, the beauty and majesty of the form. Now, take that figure and dress it in flounces and ribbons, put spangles in its hair, cumber its

fingers with rings, and its arms with bracelets, as is the fashion among ladies of barbaric taste; let it shine all over with ornament, instead of presenting that simple beauty which "unadorned is adorned the most," and you have in that dressed-up figure not a bad representation of what we mean by rhetoric. They both claim to be beautiful. But which is the superior of the two we need not say.

It is difficult for those who, like ourselves, have never listened to Hall, to form an adequate conception of his eloquence. The Rev. J. P. Mursell, who knew him at Bristol, and succeeded him at Leicester, where he laboured for about fifty years, thus describes it:—"Robert Hall possessed in an extraordinary degree the enviable and rare faculty of rendering the abstrusest subjects intelligible to ordinary minds. He had no secret, any more than other mortals, by which he could move incurable dulness, or eradicate stolid stupidity; but he had the happy art of commending the results of great penetration and thought to the commonest understanding. For this singularly felicitous capacity he was chiefly indebted to the distinctness and the vividness of his perceptions, and to his imperial command of language. . . . The compactness and lucidity of his ideas were suitably sustained by the naturalness of their attire. His words appeared less like the dress than the exercise of his thoughts,—as though language were not a system of symbols extraneous of the mind, to be plastically employed in its service, but a spontaneous creation, an intrinsic element of thought. He sustained no inconvenience arising from the difficulty, felt by some celebrated men, in selecting suitable terms in which to convey the ideas he entertained. The best possible phrases were, as by instinct, always put in the wisest possible place, superseding the necessity for revision, and rendering hopeless a more felicitous conjunction of terms.

And all this passed with a perfectly electric swiftness, so that there appeared no process of consideration, no act of choice, passing in the breast. Genius and taste constantly attended, like spiritual ministers, the advent of his ideas, standing ready to conduct them to a vehicle exquisitely fitted and fashioned to their use. He sat enthroned amidst the interminable stores of language, while words adapted to the severity of argument, to the playfulness of fancy, or to the thunders of declamation, seemed to come and go at his bidding. So equipped, then, and carrying these attributes with him into the consideration and discussion of the profoundest subjects, he would draw them forth from their obscurity, and render them palpable and intelligible to the most unpretending minds."

A faint conception of the manner and effect of Hall's preaching may be formed from the description which his biographer gives of his appearance at Cambridge :—

"The commencement of his sermons did not excite much expectation in strangers, except they were such as recollected how the mental agitation produced by diffidence characterized the first sentences of some of the orators of antiquity. He began with hesitation, and often in a very low and feeble tone, coughing frequently, as though he were oppressed by asthmatic obstructions. As he proceeded his manner became easy, graceful, and at length highly impassioned; his voice also acquired more flexibility, body, and sweetness, and in all his happier and more successful efforts, swelled into a stream of the most touching and impressive melody. The farther he advanced, the more spontaneous, natural, and free from labour seemed the progression of thought. He announced the results of the most extensive reading, of the most patient investigation, or of the profoundest thinking, with such unassuming simplicity, yet set them in such

a position of obvious and lucid reality, that the auditors wondered how things so simple and manifest should have escaped them. . . . In his higher flights, what he said of Burke might, with the slightest deduction, be applied to himself,—that 'his imperial fancy laid all nature under tribute, and collected riches from every scene of the creation, and every walk of art'; and, at the same time, that could be affirmed of Mr. Hall which could *not* be affirmed of Mr. Burke, that he never fatigued and oppressed by gaudy and superfluous imagery. Whenever the subject obviously justified it, he would yield the reins to an eloquence more diffusive and magnificent than the ordinary course of pulpit instruction seemed to require; yet so exquisite was his perception of beauty, and so sound his judgment, that not the coldest taste, provided it were real taste, could ever wish an image omitted which Mr. Hall had introduced. This inexhaustible variety augmented the general effect. The same images, the same illustrations, scarcely ever recurred. So ample were his stores, that repetition of every kind was usually avoided, while in his illustrations he would connect and contrast what was disjointed or opposed, or distinctly unfold what was abstractive or obscure, in such terms as were generally intelligible, not only to the well-informed, but to the meanest capacity. . . .

"All was doubtless heightened by his singular rapidity of utterance,—by the rhythmical structure of his sentences, . . . and, more than all, by the unequivocal earnestness and sincerity which pervaded the whole, and by the eloquence of his most speaking countenance and penetrating eye. In his sublimer strains, not only was every faculty of the soul enkindled and in entire operation, but his very features seemed fully to sympathise with the spirit, and to give out—nay, to *throw* out—thought, and sentiment, and feeling.

"From the commencement of his discourse an almost breathless silence prevailed—deeply impressive and solemnizing from its singular intenseness. Not a sound was heard but that of the preacher's voice; scarcely an eye but was fixed upon him; not a countenance that he did not watch, and read, and interpret, as he surveyed them again and again with his rapid, ever-excursive glance. As he advanced and increased in animation, five or six of the auditors would be seen to rise and lean forward over the front of their pews, still keeping their eye upon him. Some new or striking sentiment or expression would, in a few minutes, cause others to rise in like manner; shortly afterwards still more, and so on, until, long before the close of the sermon, it often happened that a considerable portion of the congregation were seen standing—every eye directed to the preacher, yet now and then for a moment glancing from one to the other, thus transmitting and reciprocating thought and feeling: Mr. Hall himself, though manifestly absorbed in his subject, conscious of the whole, receiving new animation from what he thus witnessed, reflecting it back on those who were already alive to the inspiration, until all that were at all susceptible of thought and emotion seemed wound up to the utmost limit of elevation—*on earth*—when he would close, and they reluctantly and slowly resume their seats."

The eloquence which could produce an effect such as this must have been very extraordinary. It may be well here to quote two or three specimens from his published sermons, only premising that these, according to the testimony of the best judges, are more formal than were his mentally composed but unwritten discourses. When Napoleon threatened to invade England, he preached his sermon "On the Sentiments Proper to the Present

Crisis," in which the following passage occurs:—"To form an adequate idea of the duties of this crisis, it will be necessary to raise your minds to a level with your station, to extend your views to a distant futurity, and to consequences the most remote. By a series of criminal enterprises, by the successes of guilty ambition, the liberties of Europe have been gradually extinguished; the subjugation of Holland, Switzerland, and the free towns of Germany, has completed that catastrophe, and we are the only people in the eastern hemisphere who are in possession of equal laws and a free constitution. Freedom, driven from every spot on the Continent, has sought for an asylum in a country which she always chose for her favourite abode; but she is pursued even here, and threatened with destruction. The inundation of lawless power, after covering the whole earth, threatens to follow us here; and we are most exactly, most critically placed, in the only aperture where it can be successfully repelled, in the Thermopylæ of the universe. As far as the interests of freedom are concerned, the most important by far of sublunary interests, you, my countrymen, stand in the capacity of the federal representatives of the human race; for with you it is to determine (under God) in what condition the latest posterity shall be born; their fortunes are entrusted to your care, and on your conduct at this moment depends the colour and complexion of their destiny. If liberty, after being extinguished on the Continent, is suffered to expire here, whence is it ever to emerge in the midst of that thick night that will invest it? It remains with you then to decide whether that freedom, at whose voice the kingdoms of Europe awoke from the sleep of ages, to run a career of virtuous emulation in everything great and good,—the freedom which dispelled the mists of superstition and invited the nations to behold their God,

whose magic touch kindled the rays of genius, the enthusiasm of poetry, and the flame of eloquence,—the freedom which poured into our lap opulence and arts, and embellished life with innumerable institutions and improvements, till it became a theatre of wonders; it is for you to decide whether this freedom shall yet survive, or be covered with a funeral pall, and wrapt in eternal gloom. It is not necessary to await your determination. In the solicitude you feel to approve yourselves worthy of such a trust, every thought of what is afflicting in warfare, every apprehension of danger must vanish, and you are impatient to mingle in the battle of the civilized world."

We have no wish to convey the impression that his preaching was in all respects perfect. In one most important particular it was very often defective. The very splendour of his style interfered with the promotion of results which no one could appreciate more than he. For it is always a hindrance to usefulness when the hearer, through his admiration of a preacher's powers, has his attention diverted from himself; and preaching becomes a means of ministering pleasure instead of awakening the earnest introspection from which spiritual improvement springs. That Hall aimed at the highest spiritual results we know, nevertheless his preaching was as a whole less adapted to their promotion than that of some inferior men. This, after hearing others, he has frankly acknowledged, and stated how gladly he would part with his own popularity in exchange for their power of reaching the conscience, and directing sinners to the Saviour. One of the most discriminating of his hearers, who, above all the others, was capable of appreciating what was good in him—John Foster —tells us that his preaching was too general. It did not individualise enough. It touched too little on the particular

sins to which his hearers were most prone, and did not enter sufficiently into their particular circumstances, temptations, duties, difficulties, and failures. It denounced sin in general terms, without describing the special form which it assumed in those whom he addressed, and bringing home to them the conviction, "Thou art the man." It was more a splendid and forcible exposition of truth in presence of his hearers than a direct address; and the result was that, while they felt the force of the preacher's invective, they sometimes failed to apply it to themselves. Perhaps, too, it assumed too much in his hearers, not discriminating sufficiently between classes, but regarding them all as having an acquaintance with the way of salvation at least, if not actually saved; and failed therefore in furnishing practical guidance to those who needed not only to be instructed in the elementary truths of Christianity, but assisted in their search after, and their endeavours to apprehend, Christ. This of course detracted nothing from the sublimity or profundity of his thought, the brilliancy of his conceptions, or the eloquence of his language, and implies no flaw in his preaching æsthetically considered; nevertheless, from a higher point of view, we must think that, so far as our remarks apply—and they are only occasionally applicable—they indicate a serious defect.

His conversation was no less remarkable than his preaching. Those who enjoyed his friendship speak with the highest admiration of the intellectual treat he afforded them when he poured out his rich mental stores, as topic after topic came up for discussion, and were set in the clear light of his vigorous understanding, and embellished with the hues of his glowing fancy. There is marvellous compactness in some of his recorded utterances, showing that his mind was as capable of compression as of splendid amplification.

In a single sentence, and by a felicitous figure, he throws a flood of light on the subject in hand, and seems at once to set it before you in its various aspects and bearings, at once ministering both instruction and pleasure. His fertility of resource is marvellous. He is never at a loss, and seldom at fault, unless it be when he assumes a position for the sake of eliciting a reply. And equal to his ability is his candour in listening to the utterances of others, and the frankness with which he acknowledges his obligation to those whose statements prove either suggestive or corrective to himself. It is to be regretted that so few of his conversations have been preserved, and that the few we have relate to persons more than things; but these few suffice to show how keen and clear was his vision, and how pregnant and incisive his speech. He was a great admirer of Bentham. Meeting a friend just after that writer had issued his work on jurisprudence, Mr. Hall asked him if he had read it. Being answered in the negative, he said, "Then I would recommend you to get it; it is an astonishing work, sir, the most extraordinary production of modern times; there is such vastness in its conception, and such solidity in its argument, that it is like walking through infinity on adamant." Of a certain writer's composition, he says, "Yes, it is very eloquent, but equally cold; it is the beauty of frost." A bashful man of his acquaintance "seems to beg pardon of all flesh for being in the world." And how exquisite is the following description of Bishop Watson: "Poor man, I pity him! he married public virtue in his early days, but seemed for ever afterwards to be quarrelling with his wife." A vain young preacher wanted to know if there was any passage in his sermon which he admired. Hall kept silence, but, on being pressed by the fop, said, "Yes, sir, there was one." "I am delighted to hear it, sir; pray which was it?'

"The passage from the pulpit to the vestry, sir." A grave and sanctimonious brother, whose pulpit utterances were not over sensible, attempted to rebuke him thus: "I am surprised, Mr. Hall, you should indulge in such levity, after the very impressive discourse you have given us this morning." "Oh, sir," he replied, "we both talk nonsense occasionally; the only difference between us is that you talk yours in the pulpit, and I mine out." Another is reported to have gone to him saying indignantly, "Pray, Mr. Hall, did you ever say I was a fool?" "No, sir, I never said you were a fool, sir, but I have always thought so." Walking with a friend one day, he saw a plaintive gentleman approaching whom he wanted to avoid, because he was always talking about his ailments. It was of no use attempting it, however; he was close upon them. Then said Mr. Hall, "We must make the best of it." Up comes the complaining friend. "How do you do, Mr. Hall?" "How do you do, sir? I hope you are very well." "No, sir, I am very bad indeed; I have been quite at death's door since I saw you." "Have you indeed, sir? It's a pity but you had walked in. I wish you good day, sir."

It were a great mistake to infer from these conversations that Mr. Hall took delight in giving pain. He was in reality most tender in his treatment, and most considerate of the feelings of others. He was severe only when wrong roused his indignation, or overweening conceit called for rebuke. He was as ready to encourage modest merit as to scathe inflated presumption and pride. No man ever more cordially recognized the excellence which differed from his own; and no one with such transcendent abilities ever formed a lower estimate of himself. His humility was not less remarkable than his talent. He was a man of childlike spirit, of transparent simplicity of character, of condescending

disposition, of true brotherly sympathy, of piety as fervent and deep as it was unpretending. With all his caustic wit, we believe with Mr. Mursell that "a gentler or nobler nature has seldom adorned the earth." It blended the attributes of the giant and the child; or, to use another figure of the same writer, "in it the violet was seen blooming at the foot of the oak."

Some attempts have been made to compare his usefulness with that of other gifted men—not quite fairly, perhaps, the conditions not being equal. We have heard, however, an enthusiastic admirer of his speak depreciatingly of what Chalmers had done as compared with Hall. To those who know anything of the life-work of the two men, the estimate seems as absurd as it is unfair to Hall to make the comparison. The direct results of the two men's labours are not to be mentioned in the same breath. Nor, indeed, is he to be compared with some greatly inferior men. Many things contributed to limit and weaken his immediate influence. He was of a critical rather than a sanguine temperament; and a certain degree of the latter is necessary to give men power over others. He who has to deal with men as they are must not be over fastidious as to the artistic correctness of the means he employs. The razor, or the lancet, or even the scimitar, though a beautifully polished instrument, is not so useful as an axe of rougher edge for hewing down a forest. The pencil of the artist can be used to great purpose in tracing the lines of a picture, but it is not so useful for hewing stones or breaking up fallow ground. Hall's taste was too refined to admit of his dashing into public movements with that *abandon* and enthusiasm which are necessary to immediate and extensive influence. His estimate of human nature did not permit him to trust it sufficiently, and render him sufficiently hopeful; and his high

sense of right did not permit his pandering to its lower qualities so as to secure its suffrages, or to move it to any very large extent. The state of his health, the delicacy of his nervous system, unfitted him for taking much part in public movements. He had not the powers of organization which Wesley and Chalmers possessed, and of which Charles Spurgeon enjoys so large a share. Though he had the uncompromising integrity, he lacked the rough earnestness, of a reformer. He was not even a prophet like Irving. He did not profess to have any special message for the churches or the nation. He was content to present generally recognized truth in the beautiful forms in which his mind naturally embodied it, and to apply it to the daily life of the members of his own comparatively small congregation. This modesty made him shrink from occupying a prominent place in public attention; and his high standard made him dissatisfied with his own efforts. He was not content to bring anything before the public unless it were his best; and it required no little persuasion to induce him to publish. Add to all this, that the denomination with which he was connected was the most democratic and disjointed, as well as the most unfashionable and obscure, and we have enough to explain why a man with his gifts exerted so little direct influence,—why he headed no popular movement, became the leader of no party, and neither revived a church nor greatly moved the world.

The indirect results of a man's life, though not so easily calculated, are not less important than the direct; and, as regards these, Hall's great gifts were neither bestowed nor received in vain. He will bear comparison in this respect with any of his compeers. The very fact of a man of his gifts being content to occupy, for the sake of principle, the humble position which it was his lot to fill through life, was

in itself a testimony to the supremacy of truth of inestimable value. His writings rendered good service to his Nonconformist principles; for he was capable of stating them with a clearness which few could surpass, and illustrating them with an eloquence which none could equal. And we do not undervalue those when we say that his life rendered to Nonconformity a more valuable service still. The members of a proud and dominant Church could not afford to look with its long-cherished contempt on a body of Christians who, however obscure their position, had among their ministers one with whom, in point of mental gifts and attainments, few of their own privileged hierarchy could venture to compete; and whose eloquence not only eclipsed all that belonged to modern, but recalled some of the most splendid triumphs of ancient times. There was a man who in mental stature stood head and shoulders above most of them, and whose matchless eloquence the most gifted of them might envy—to whom the possibility of snatching the most valuable prize presented no temptation—who preferred the conventicle to the cathedral, the Dissenting parsonage to the Episcopal palace, the small stipend and homely garb of the Baptist minister to the Bishop's mitre and princely revenues—association with the poor and unlettered men who composed his denomination, to fellowship with the learned and noble of the land, and a seat in the House of Lords, because he would maintain his principles in their integrity, and bear unfettered testimony to the truth! What a contrast to those poor renegades who, as soon as they have made a little advance in life, begin to discern that Dissent is vulgar; and, as if fashion were all to them and principle nothing, forsake their humble brethren, and seek a more congenial religious home among the fashionable worshippers who violate all the principles which they have been accustomed to hold sacred!

Such religious dereliction is disgraceful to all who are guilty of it. And if little harm is done by them, it is only because their character has little weight, and that their new associates, who discern their motives, have learned to treat them with the contempt they deserve. Such a betrayal of principle by a man of Hall's mark would have done incalculable evil, even though the prospect of a bishopric had been the bait employed. His fidelity rendered a service to the interests of truth, the value of which it is difficult to estimate. And if the denomination with which he was connected has improved its position and risen in public estimation since his time, it is greatly owing to his unflinching adherence to the principles it holds. Even now, in districts where his co-religionists are very few and very poor, his name and that of one or two others is sufficient to preserve them from contempt, and to secure them a measure of deferential treatment from the members of dominant sects, which otherwise they could scarcely hope to obtain. And the triumphs which we anticipate in the future—triumphs for our principles over the errors which are extensively taught and practised—triumphs which, we venture to believe, are not far distant, will be owing not a little to the splendid talents, the blameless life, and the lofty and uncompromising integrity, combined with the large-hearted catholicity of Robert Hall.

To a small extent, perhaps,—and in a manner for which he was not to blame,—his influence was indirectly injurious. Great men have always a host of admirers and imitators. And it all depends on the discrimination with which they admire, and the wisdom with which they imitate, whether it will prove injurious or otherwise. Undiscriminating admirers become proud of their connection with the object of their admiration, and are spoiled in consequence. They assume airs of superiority, not on the ground of their own

merits, but because they listen to such and such a preacher. We have heard men boast of this, and have thought how deplorable it was that such preaching had produced no better effect on their small minds than to make it grow luxuriantly the rank weed of conceit! In some instances it was so with Hall. As for his imitators, they are legion. And unfortunately for them, the peculiarities of the man were so few, and of such a nature, that the copy of them which they present only serves to make them appear ridiculous. Imitators generally seize on peculiarities, which, though tolerable in the original, are simply unbearable when they are borrowed. It might have been a good thing had they copied the one thing which they might have copied with advantage—his manly independence. When he heard one of his hearers remarking on his likeness to his predecessor, Mr. Robinson, he instantly resolved that that which occasioned the remark should be avoided; and that whatever eminence he might attain, should be in his own, and not in another man's, line. And he was right. It is better, and will serve more useful ends, to cultivate one's own peculiar gifts, than to copy in inferior manner what may be the more brilliant qualities of another.

With regard to moral qualities, of course the case is different. We should all be desirous to emulate whatever good we see in any. And foremost among the qualities which should commend him to our admiration—the only one we can notice here—is his fidelity to principle. When we see a man who might fairly have aspired to the highest ecclesiastical honours, or who, devoting his talents to the service of his country, might not unreasonably have hoped to reach the highest senatorial dignity,—when we see him deliberately foregoing the possibility of attaining to such distinctions, contentedly fulfilling his vocation as a humble

Nonconformist pastor, confining his matchless eloquence to the walls of a small dissenting chapel, and his wise teaching to the men and women of lowly station who usually frequent such places of worship, we feel that we have before us a life which is fitted to stir the pulses of our young men, and to nerve them with the courage which will not only enable them to dare and do, but, if need be, to suffer and endure. We know, indeed, that not many are gifted with the martyr-spirit—the spirit which subordinates the near and the tangible to the distant and the unseen, and bears patiently the present scorn and pain in hope of the future reward. We know too well that there are many meaner souls who will do meaner things—who, for the sake of a little temporal advantage, will forego their spiritual birthright. But if there be but one or two who make the wiser choice, it will be no small gain if these nobler souls have their sometimes flagging courage rallied by contact with an illustrious example. And even the men of meaner type may have their grovelling tendencies restrained and rebuked, and be preserved from greater degradation, by being brought for a while under ennobling influences. Let it be understood that, after all, there is nothing so authoritative as conscience —nothing so sacred as duty—nothing so worthy of pursuit as the right and the true. In spite of appearances, the only man who cannot miss his reward is the man who does right. The good we do lives on. The truths we utter take wings, and, like song-birds, soar into other regions, and awaken echoes in other breasts. Whether our pursuit of it be successful or not successful in the world's sense,—

"The path of duty is the way to glory."



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